

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

XXX

APRIL, 1953

No. 4

The Magic Rug of Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire

MARGARET C. FARQUHAR¹

In 1931 Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire began weaving a magic rug which was to carry their readers, not only over the North Africa of their original *Magic Rug* tale, but over their native Europe as well as their adopted land of America.

This varied background, presented by the husband and wife team in their books for children, is a natural sequitur of their combined experiences. Those who have followed the course of the two will remember that Ingri, born in Norway, was encouraged to follow her artistic bent and attended art school in Munich. Here she met Edgar, son of an Italian painter and an American born mother. Edgar had specialized in murals and Ingri in portraits of children. With the appearance of *The Magic Rug*, their first book for children, a new career evolved. The line of books succeeding combine Ingri's intimate knowledge of children, her sense of humor and Edgar's dramatic quality plus the exceptional artistic ability of both. Their co-operative method of producing the lithographic plates in color is a tale in itself,

well described by May Massee in *The Horn Book* of September-October, 1935. Bertha E. Mahony and Marguerite M. Mitchell give a full account in *The Horn Book* of July-August, 1940 of the careful first hand research carried out by the d'Aulaires for each one of their books.

As was the fate of the figures in that first magic oriental rug, all the d'Aulaire figures have risen from a one dimensional form to take on a particular life of their own. And as it happened in *The Magic Rug* when the figures jumped out of all the rugs in the Arabian market place to join the procession, so have the figures of Europe and America jumped out of their setting to intermingle as they join the d'Aulaire procession.

The figures in this larger rug of the d'Aulaires have come forward to intermingle not only from several nations but from various ages. In *Ola*, Norway becomes:

¹Assistant Librarian in charge of children's work in the Pequot Library of Southport, Conn., where the d'Aulaires live.

the strangest country in the world. It is so crowded with mountains, forests, huge trolls, red capped gnomes and alluring Hulder-maidens that only a few human people have room to live there.

Ola, that blue-eyed Norwegian lad, is one of those humans. He is approached on his travels by "a howling black dragon" which "rushed out from a cave," but we who observe the illustrations perceive the object to be a train emerging from a snow laden tunnel. Ola, in this book bearing his name, is told by the fisherman:

that strange people live in small houses at the bottom of the sea, and they have lots of goats grazing on their grass roofs. But these goats are very greedy for the tid bits of the fishing hook and to their owner's horror the goats get drawn right up and change into codfish.

Ola may believe these legends, proof of which he does not actually see. Not so in *Ola and Blakken* where the folk tale creatures become an integral part of the story. Here a troll cock appears before the very eyes of Ola and his friends. Even Ola's mother recognizes this evil bird who sits on the roofs of two store houses, looking at them with big, black eyes.

"Oh, for all the world's pancakes," cried the mother. "That is the troll cock. Now it will certainly take Blakken and all the goats and sheep and pigs and cows and other horses, too."

A tall tale indeed unfolds when Ola kills the troll cock with the old blunderbuss loaded with a silver button. Jutul and Gygra, the giant owners of the troll cock, appear on the scene to break up the celebration of the children, animals, Hulder-maidens (who looked like real girls but really lived on farms inside the hill and milked tiny black cows) and the small white bearded gnomes who resembled

balls of grey yarn as they rolled happily along. Fortunately, the sun appeared over the mountain just in time, as it always had a way of doing in the days of folk tales, turning the wicked giant trolls to stone.

Unlike the extremely realistic illustrations of some of our modern fairy tale collections, the d'Aulaires portray imaginatively the subjects of imagination. They blend their trolls into the landscape so successfully that one is always a little suspicious that another might see boulders where Ola found trolls.

Probably more outright humor is found in *The Children of The Northlights*, *Don't Count Your Chick* and *Foxie* than in any of the d'Aulaire books although it is a quality which creeps into all of them. Much of the humor is carried in the illustrations, as in the bath house scene of *Children of the Northlights*, where the children "sat in the steam clouds like angels in the sky," or on the following page which finds them diving and swimming in banks of snow. Appealing even more to children is the deer which, upset on the swift icy slope, falls into the mother's lap. And on the last page is the sun which actually laps the snow!

Children of the Northlights is notable also for the family feeling which brings us close in spirit to those faraway Lapp children. Lasse-Lapp and Lappe-Lise whisper affectionately as they successfully plot to fool their family by dressing in a bear skin. And how homesick they become during their stay in the valley town. Each day they watch the snow-bare spot on the mountain, "for when it had grown to the shape of a waving man, their parents had promised to come."

In
lantic

M
sic
wi
an
he
th
a t

Th
spread
of Atla
folding
practica
Colum
now the
pleted;
d'Aulai
rocket
who kn

Wit
laire
Leif Eri
Lucky.
style of
the statu

But
he sa
And
rock,
all an
homo
saw
rode
welco

But c
man qua
kind.

"Fair
build,
of th
himse

Before
George W

Introducing *The Conquest of the Atlantic* is a quotation from Lamartine:

Mankind is a weaver who from the wrong side works on the carpet of time. The day will come when he will see the right side and understand the grandeur of the pattern he with his own hands has woven through the centuries without seeing anything but a tangle of strings.

The d'Aulaires proceed from here to spread before our eyes the immense carpet of Atlantic history. Out of this carpet, unfolding from Norway, Portugal, Spain and practically every nation, step Eric the Red, Columbus, Balboa and the others. Even now the pattern of the Atlantic is not completed; the carpet still on the loom. The d'Aulaires suggest future seadromes, rocket machinery, "an era of seconds—who knows?"

With their own weaving, the d'Aulaires bring into sharp focus the figure of Leif Ericsson in the biography, *Leif The Lucky*. Related in the forceful and poetic style of the Scandinavian saga, Leif attains the stature of Thor, himself.

But Leif saw further than the others, and he saw that people were shipwrecked there. And close to the wind, right up to the rock, Leif steered his ship, and saved them all and much of their goods. Then he sailed home to Brattali, and when Eric the Red saw Leif's ship he mounted his horse and rode to the shore to give his son a stately welcome.

But earlier Leif had exhibited the human qualities of a boy growing to mankind.

"Fair are these slopes and here we shall build," said Erik the Red. "Fair is the smell of the porridge pot," thought Leif to himself.

Before *Leif The Lucky*, had come *George Washington*, the first of six unique

picture-biographies which have possibly done more to arouse an interest among children in the lives of great men than any hitherto published. In addition to the two above mentioned, *Abraham Lincoln*, *Pocahontas*, *Benjamin Franklin* and last year's *Buffalo Bill* have the visual appeal found in no other biographies. Their rhythmic, clear cut prose with authentic details, discriminately selected, matches the superiority of the illustrations.

Abraham Lincoln was the recipient of the Caldecott medal for the most distinguished picture book in 1940. As is often the case, there may have been some differences in opinion among the committee members as to the validity of the choice. One can imagine the d'Aulaire constituents saying, "This is great art. It is untraditional as was the art of Randolph Caldecott, himself. This stone lithograph technique in color that the d'Aulaires have worked out is unique." And the conservative opponents crying, "All very well for their Norwegian tales but to distort Abraham Lincoln with foreign interpretations is heresy." The defenders continue the debate. "Since when has American opinion been formed solely by American born? Is not America the melting pot of the world? Beside, the d'Aulaire interpretation is not purely European. Notice the primitive Early American quality in the school room scene; in the illustration of Abe leaving for Washington. Notice the humor, the kindness, the nobility, the awkwardness, the intelligence, all the characteristics of Lincoln as we know him, exaggerated, certainly, but expertly handled." One is grateful that the committee saw fit to award the medal to perhaps the most inspired of all

author-illustrators for children today. Any one of a number of the d'Aulaire books might well have been awarded also a Newbery medal for the literary merit of their prose.

"That is the kind of a story I like," remarked a second grade boy who had never indicated an interest in books until hearing the d'Aulaire *Abraham Lincoln* read aloud. The book had meat for this youngster as it does for all children from kindergarten through the sixth grade. In fact, it would be unwise to indicate any grade barriers for the d'Aulaire biographies, since discerning adults will pore over illustrations and text as joyfully as any second grader.

After a hand at biography, the d'Aulaires turn again to folk lore in *Don't Count Your Chicks*. An old Scandinavian folk tale is named here after the American proverb. Good natured humor, born of a simple mind, beams from the round face of the woman who counted her chicks too soon. There is no need to tell the reader that the heron is well loved by animals with those illustrations of the cat rubbing against her dress in affectionate regard and later presenting her with a mouse prize. The simple lines of prose are all that are needed to amplify this calamitous tale, a favorite with nursery and kindergarten ages.

In *Wings for Per*, the main character becomes more symbolic, slightly less human than Ola and Lisse and Lasse of the earlier stories, less solid than the hero, Leif. The boy Per represents the spirit of all free-loving people. He leaves his home, "halfway between the sea and the clouds"

where "lay a farm tucked under a crag," to escape the oppressors of his native land, finding his way to join the air force in America in order to assist in the liberation of his own peace loving nation. The author-illustrators have woven fast here, completing a circular carpet in itself.

And Per flew back across the ocean and took off to meet the enemy. His engine hummed and he hummed with it. Then his voice rose over the hum, and singing he went into the battle. For the first time Per was singing. "Halfway between the sea and the clouds there lies a farm up the mountain wall. It was my mother's paradise, for there she was free. And free she shall be," sang Per as he dived for the enemy and shot.

Nils, in the book of the same name, typifies a second generation American who is able to reconcile his Norwegian manner of dress in an American fashion. He proudly wears to school a handsome pair of long stockings with "white roses and black roses and white stars and black stars all over them," sent by his grandmother in Norway. After a tortuous day of ridicule at school, Nils hides the stockings in shame. Early the next morning, he is awakened "by strange sounds which seemed to whisper to him:"

"An English boy helped his father build this house," the house timbers creaked.

"A Dutch boy helped his father build me," the dutch oven murmured.

The dry leaves on the grape arbor under his window rustled as if to say: "An Italian boy planted us."

"One for all and all for one," crowed the weathercock on top of the barn roof. "Those boys were regular fellows though they wore buckskin breeches, long stockings, and wooden shoes, and they helped to make this country great."

N
day y
freezi
laugh
muffs

"
n
"
up
hi
st
w
A
N

A
nation
Nils h
displa
Russia
who a
hold t
Nils in
studyin

As
cepts u
the d'A
ing sto
with a
cinnam
man w
of show
Foxie d
first pu
astonish
over th
stage to
promise

Nils had his innings on the first cold day when the other boys stand around freezing because they are afraid of being laughed at by wearing mittens and ear muffs.

"I don't have to freeze to show that I am not a sissy," said Nils with a wide grin. "Who cares if I am different!" He pulled up his blue jeans so everybody could see his beautiful warm stockings with black stars and white stars and black roses and white roses.

And this time no body felt like teasing Nils.

A conscious attempt at creating international understanding among children, *Nils* has an important place in an era of displaced persons. A teacher tells of a Russian child, newly arrived in America, who after hearing the story read, asked to hold the book, after which she clasped *Nils* in her arms for the rest of the day, studying the pictures at her leisure.

As a contrast to the ideological concepts underlying *Wings for Per* and *Nils*, the d'Aulaires give us the purely entertaining story of *Foxie*, that fascinating dog with a head like a fox and a tail like a cinnamon roll. In spite of the kind gentleman who feeds *Foxie*, and the attractions of show business with a piano-playing cat, *Foxie* dreams of her former master. At her first public appearance, the audience is astonished to find the trick dog leaping over their heads from her place on the stage to the arms of her old friend who promises never to tease her again.

Pocahontas, the famous "American princess," who was acclaimed by the heads of Europe, stands high in the d'Aulaire procession, as does *Benjamin Franklin* with its jolly and authoritative picture of that remarkable gentleman. Pennsylvania Dutch scrolls intertwine here with printing presses and lightening rods in delightful design. *Buffalo Bill* with his natural appeal, enhanced by the d'Aulaire artistry, promises to create a run on libraries and book stores.

For over twenty years the d'Aulaire loom has not been idle nor have the weavers lacked ideas for an endless variety of designs. May their miraculous carpet long continue to unfold.

BOOKS WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY INGRI AND EDGAR D'AULAIRE:

THE MAGIC RUG	1931
OLA	1932
OLA AND BLAKKEN AND LINE,	
SINE, TRINE	1933
CHILDREN OF THE NORTHLIGHTS	1935
GEORGE WASHINGTON	1936
ABRAHAM LINCOLN	1939
LEIF THE LUCKY	1941
DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKS	1943
WINGS FOR PER	1944
POCAHONTAS	1946
NILS	1948
FOXIE	1949
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN	1950
BUFFALO BILL	1952

The Teaching of the Language Skills: A Statement of Policy

ERNEST HILTON¹

The teaching of the so-called *basic skills* has always been one of the major responsibilities of public education. For a variety of reasons there is currently renewed emphasis upon this function. Certainly no skills are more "basic" than the *language skills*; for these are the skills by which men think, and share and exchange thought.

There is an enormous body of data on the teaching of the language skills; much of it the report of careful research, some statements of philosophical direction, and many valuable reports of interesting curriculum practice. The teacher searching this mass of data for sure guides to effective classroom procedures may be confused by the sheer bulk of it, and perhaps even more by the apparent contradictions and points of disagreement to be found within it. It seems appropriate, therefore, to attempt a statement of policy on the teaching of the language skills. The purpose of this paper is to offer such a statement.

1. *The effective teaching of the language skills is one of the fundamental responsibilities of the elementary school.*

This may seem to be a wholly superfluous assertion; yet in a significant sense it is a necessary and primary assertion in any current statement of policy concerning the language arts. Certainly everyone is aware of the attacks being made on the schools today, and of the criticisms of the results the schools are achieving. It is

worth noting that some of the most pointed of the criticisms are concerned specifically with the language arts curriculum. A full analysis of those criticisms is not appropriate here, but two or three points are relevant. In the first place, a goodly measure of the criticism is intelligent, sincere, and well-intentioned. Not all of it is; but much of it is. Parents are honestly concerned about their children's reading skills, about their ability to express thought effectively orally and in writing, about their spelling, and even about their penmanship. Some of these parents, critical of the results the schools are achieving, are basically friendly to the cause of public education and to the spirit of modern educational theory. It is their privilege and right to be critical, and in the long run it is a healthy thing for the schools to have criticism of the kind these parents offer. Such criticism must be accepted in good spirit and with intelligence; indeed, even criticism which is more bitter and hostile must be accepted and evaluated in objective open-mindedness. Little good for anyone will eventuate if when the schools are criticized their defense is clouded with animus and ill-will.

More to the point, it seems safe to say that such evidence as does exist on the question of how well the schools are teaching the language skills offers little reason

¹Acting Dean of the Fredonia, New York, State Teachers College.

to be
fusing
mass
today
than t
This m
chiever
trigui
clear c
ever, t
are ach
did chi
of grea
discuss
that po
know v
held. V
tempts
profile
is good
and th
process
dren. '
should
reading
propria
and ran
solely a
how to
on such
availabl

Even
remains
schools
teaching
ing the
The pu
Even if
made, a
culture
children

to be complacent. The evidence is confusing and difficult to appraise; from the mass available it seems that the schools today are not really doing much better than the schools of several decades past. This matter of comparative studies of achievement in the language skills is an intriguing one, but not one from which many clear conclusions emerge. It is clear, however, that in silent reading children today are achieving a higher level of skill than did children a quarter century ago. A point of great importance is often neglected in discussions of this matter, however, and that point is that no one seems really to know what expectations may properly be held. What limits exist, beyond which attempts to force growth will be not only profitless but harmful to children? There is good evidence that such limits do exist; and that like other facets of the growth process they vary greatly for different children. The schools—and the public—should be concerned with the diversity of reading materials and the varied skills appropriate to them; with the variety, depth, and range of reading skills needed, not solely and narrowly with the question of how to achieve ever higher performance on such tests of reading skills as are now available.

Even with this caution well in mind it remains fundamentally true that the schools must accept responsibility for teaching the language skills, and for teaching them as well as they can be taught. The public expects the school to do so. Even if this demand were less strenuously made, any examination of contemporary culture would define the need of all the children of all the people for effective

mastery of the skills of oral and written expression, reading, and listening. It follows that any educational theory or educational pronouncement which seems even to imply a neglect of this obligation is foolish and short-sighted. Instead, the schools must share with parents and with the public at large their determination to do a good job of teaching the basic language skills, and share with them too how they propose to go about it. Teachers must teach with conviction. To do so will in and of itself give direction to method, for method flows from purpose.

2. In order to teach the language skills effectively the school must clarify its goals, and reach a working agreement on their sequential order.

Acceptance of the obligation to teach the language skills gives the elementary school a general goal. To assure effective instruction the school must go beyond this point to a more analytical statement of what skills are to be taught, and when they are to be taught. The search for objectives definite enough to give clear direction to teaching is a difficult task. The difficulty of the task may be admitted, but the necessity of doing it must be asserted. Undoubtedly some measure of weakness and ineffectiveness in the teaching of the language skills has resulted from confusion and dispersion of effort resulting from a lack of clear purpose; from what at times have seemed even to be contradictions in purpose. The bug-a-boo opposition of growth in skills and growth in personality; the emotionally charged conflict of "growth" with "standards" are illustrative of this point. The school must move to more certainty about what its job is.

As mentioned earlier, there is good evidence that children today do more effective silent reading than did children some years ago. This is because the schools set themselves the task of teaching the silent reading skills, and analyzed what those skills are; at least to the point where teachers could take hold of such a skill as *reading to note detail* and teach for its development. This can be done for other of the language skills; and any curriculum effort aimed at helping children achieve maximum growth in language must identify the skills to be developed.

Moreover, to help children become effective in using the language skills the school must establish some sequence of goals. Granting the difference in learning rate for different children and the consequent need for overlapping the work of grades, it remains necessary that there be agreement within any school on fairly specific instructional emphases, in progressive order.

On this matter of sequencing in goals or objectives there is much that needs to be known which simply is not yet known. These gaps in what is known are properly the concern of research workers; in the meantime those who share responsibility for curriculum development must act upon what is known about growth and upon tentative conclusions drawn from experienced common sense. To illustrate this point: One of the concerns in the language arts is helping children learn to use descriptive words effectively. In a first grade, cooperatively dictating a chart story which will record some shared adventure, the teacher can emphasize the use of words that give action, color, and precision to

the report. So too, of course, the teacher can help the individual first grader in his personal expressional efforts. But at what level does the curriculum provide for teaching about adjectives and adverbs? Perhaps at the sixth grade? If in a sixth grade children are writing reports and stories in connection with a study of national parks an opportunity for teaching on this particular skill may be developed. The class may take some one story and work together to improve it, to give it interest and action by carefully considered use of descriptive words. After some experiences of this sort the teacher may use several class periods for systematic teaching about adjectives and adverbs. There will remain for development in later grades more complex and subtle understanding of these parts of speech and their functions.

The point of this illustration is to emphasize that while there is no final certainty as to the right or proper time, or level, at which to teach many of the language skills the school must nevertheless establish some sequence of objectives upon which to proceed. The most profitable approach to the task of identifying the skills to be taught and of establishing their sequential order is through cooperative study and decision by the whole staff. And, the need for progress records for individual children, keyed to the language skills established as instructional emphases grade by grade, is obvious.

There is a danger here. It is, of course, that the agreement reached on skills to be taught may be used as an inflexible pattern of grade standards. This can result only from misinterpretation and misuse of the

objecti
not inv
teachi
growth
the dir
and wi
growth
affected
dren to
terpre
proceed
aim for

In a
tially o
ning wi
ing ex
Sound
quires t
public
of the c
or mar
dren m
to the j
ior high

3. Mor
skills w
scious o

To
children
read, w
conscio
years ag
in New
short de
lum pra
them in
practice
different
in the o
of consc

objectives, however, and the danger does not invalidate the need for them. Actual teaching must always aim for maximum growth possible for the individual child, in the direction indicated by any objective, and with due regard for other aspects of growth which may be directly or indirectly affected. Good teaching never holds children to a common expectancy, rigidly interpreted; but good teaching does need to proceed toward clear objectives and does aim for common learnings for all children.

In addition to clear objectives, sequentially ordered, effective curriculum planning will seek to assure continuity in learning experiences in the language skills. Sound curriculum development policy requires that teachers from all levels of the public school plan together. The pattern of the curriculum must not have wide gaps or marked changes of direction for children moving from the elementary school to the junior high school, or from the junior high school to the senior high school.

3. *More effective learning of the language skills will be assured if children are conscious of the goals established.*

To state this thought more simply, children will learn more effectively to read, write, speak and listen if they are conscious of what they are learning. Some years ago, as part of the Regents' Inquiry in New York State, Dora V. Smith wrote short descriptions of language arts curriculum practices in six schools, arranging them in order of merit. This statement of practice in the "best" school, a statement differentiating instruction there from that in the other schools, illustrates this matter of conscious learning:

The difference lay chiefly in the rec-

ognition given, in pupil and teacher planning and evaluation, to conscious growth and development in language power as such, and in the attainment of well-rounded habits in reading. At the moment when the activity in progress called for the giving of reports, specific instruction in methods of gathering, organizing, and presenting ideas was provided in the social situation and in proper relationship to social ends. In addition to the evaluation of important social outcomes, both teachers and pupils evaluated expressional activities in terms of actual progress in control over language. Conscious language goals were among those set up...

In short, the children knew what they were learning. This clearly implies the desirability of cooperative teacher and pupil planning of curriculum experiences; and the need for cooperative group and individual pupil evaluation as learning activities proceed.

The implications of this suggestion for the "core curriculum" and its counterpart in the middle and lower grades, the large unit of work, need to be suggested. The values of such organization of learning experiences are well known and do not require statement here. There is, however, a hazard involved. It is that the learning of the language skills may become too wholly incidental; that children may be entirely unaware of the language growth possible through the experience. Fortunately, the dilemma here can be avoided by conscious attention of both teacher and learners to the language skills involved.

4. *Effective teaching of the language skills requires that schools develop classroom experiences in which children have real need and purpose for using language.*

This, too, is a familiar point but a most necessary one in any statement of curricu-

lum policy in the language arts. To establish clear objectives, to plan for sequential emphasis on them, and to direct the attention of pupils to the skills involved will avail little unless the curriculum provides experiences in language which have meaning and value for children.

Essentially, the test here proposed for any curriculum experience designed to build language skills is this: Does it really matter, to the children? Or to put it another way, is the experience one to which children will respond with enthusiasm; with enough enthusiasm to assure sustained interest and effort?

The literature is full of reports of language experiences which seem to meet this test. There is the story of a second grade unit on farm life, with the children visiting several different farms. The teacher took snapshots of the children, in groups, in different situations and these became illustrations in a book. Appropriate accompanying text was developed. Later the group churned and mothers came to hear the reports, to hear farm animal stories read with practiced skill, too see the exhibits, and to eat the buttered crackers. The uses of language in this activity are obvious, and the uses had meaning and purpose the children could feel and understand. The school newspaper, a widely used curriculum experience, is another illustration of how the learning of the language skills can be developed in terms of real purpose. Still another illustration is the use of assembly programs as a way of sharing experiences.

The illustrations could be multiplied. The crucial point is that effective learning of the language skills, as of other skills,

hinges on the motivation of the learner. Good learning experiences are those that have appeal for children, which call for effective use of language skills in relationship to purposes they accept as worth achieving.

5. The teaching of the language skills must not be divorced from guidance in ethical values.

This point may seem to fall outside the scope of a statement concerned with the teaching of the language skills; yet responsibility for developing skills can never be separated neatly from responsibility for the ends to which the skills are to be used. Children live today in a world of changing and conflicting values. Television puppets busily exhort them to buy this or that product, the claims for which are often transparently thin and exaggerated. Opera and movie stars parade across the newspaper pages and television screens testifying to the virtues of this or that cigarette; World Series heroes endorse breakfast foods; and political maneuvering sometimes exhibits fine mastery of the smear technique and the skillful use of the half-truth. Crime, including juvenile crime, is everyday news. Democracy is challenged on more than one front. All this goes on in the life of the child at the same time the school and home are being pressed to develop sound moral and spiritual values.

Without developing the point in detail, perhaps enough has been suggested to lend support to the statement that growth in the language skills cannot be separated from the uses to which they are put. What is taught and the way it is taught should have a full measure of dedi-

(Continued on Page 213)

Th
engage
and by
munica
nifican
ing, of
has alw
nature,
bered
some ac
importa
the vio
chanic
few of
hearing
art of l
young m
her sen
least un
househo
uneasy
somewh
war-fare
of certai
the telep
cess by t
sonnel.
activities
ability o

Teac
rouse in
sound. L
consciou
here is
amid the
sounds, s
of under
lives eve

Listen Before Writing

JOHN H. TREANOR¹

The art of listening has for some years engaged teachers of English at all levels, and by virtue of modern channels of communication it has assumed a growing significance in the lives of everybody. Listening, of course, is nothing new. Mankind has always listened to the phenomena of nature, the beauties of art, the unnumbered impulses of the human voice. In some activities the ability to listen is highly important. The doctor and the stethoscope, the violinist and his instrument, the mechanic and the motor—these are only a few of the ordinary uses of the sense of hearing. Even in homely situations, the art of listening is significant and sharp. A young mother sleeps "with one ear open", her sensibilities completely aroused at the least unusual sound from her infant. A householder awakens at night, rendered uneasy by a peculiar, half-defined noise somewhere in the house. Soldiers in jungle war-fare know only too well the meaning of certain midnight sounds. Businesses like the telephone company measure their success by the quality of listening among personnel. These and many other every-day activities advert in no small way to the ability of human beings to use their ears.

Teachers, too, have endeavored to arouse in their pupils an awareness of sound. Listening with a critical ear, with a conscious ear, with an appreciative ear—here is the aim of the teaching; so that amid the reverberations of ten thousand sounds, some power of discrimination and of understanding may be developed in the lives even of the very young.

Listening with an attitude of co-operative attention certainly should be fostered among pupils. But admirable as this training is, there remains another phase in the art of listening that may justify some expenditure of time and energy—the sense of hearing as an aid to the study and practise of composition.

Now the art of composition, as all practitioners know so well, is a very complex business, not the least factor of which is the summoning of ideas. It is difficult enough to command an ample vocabulary or any felicitous habit of phrase, even for experts. Teachers of English know the problems when boys and girls are engaged. For troublesome as expression undoubtedly is, the producing of ideas, the discovery or the inventing of something to say—these are no less difficult to teach and to practise. Perhaps, then, as a contribution to this fundamental aspect of composition, training in the art of listening may be of considerable value.

The wonders of this great and teeming world about us are continually clamoring for attention, knocking at the door of our senses, so to speak, until in some degree or other we consciously heed their importunities. We see, we hear, we taste, we smell, and we feel. "Sense," wrote Santayana, "is like a lively child always at our elbow, saying 'Look, look, what is that?'" It is through the channels of our five senses that sensations are poured into the con-

¹Master, Francis Parkman School, Boston, Massachusetts, and Director, Language Arts Curriculum Center.

sciousness of the mind, there to be stored, combined, re-assembled, reproduced—filtered, as it were, through the personality of the individual. And while the sense of sight is the most widely exercised, the other senses are not idle, and certainly the sense of hearing makes its own unique contribution—as any deaf person will so resignedly testify.

Let us, therefore, being concerned with the art of listening, turn to this single sense: the ability to hear; to discover what contribution by means of purposeful training an "educated" ear can make to the basic factor of composition,—the finding of something to say.

By means of a device known as Familiar Situations², pupils in grades four, five, and six are trained in the use of all five senses, in situations or under topics entirely familiar to average boys and girls. Briefly, the scheme embraces a long series of exercises through which pupils are encouraged to pay attention to the testimony of their senses.³ Under a given "situation", for example, pupils discover that all five senses—not alone the sense of sight—are valuable faculties. They learn to see and to smell things and to taste and to feel. And, what concerns us at the moment, they learn to hear.

Suppose, then, we consider a Familiar Situation—the circus. Everyone knows what a circus is: clowns, elephants, horses, acrobats, peanuts, sawdust, and ten thou-

sand other things. These we see. But there are also things to taste, things to smell, things to feel. And there are things to hear, as the following "ideas" reveal:

Circus (things heard)

noise	chewing gum	bugles
excitement	announcer	pop-cornman
horns	laughter	rattling of programs
confusion	voices	loud-speakers,
music	crying of babies	whistles
singing	snap of whip	screeches
cheers	cannon shot	thunder of hoofs
clapping	drums	stamping
applause	trumpets	footsteps
roars	bands	neighs
barking	cries of joy	barks
growls	candy wrappers	tramping
		swish of whips

This list of "things heard" was produced in a fourth-grade twenty-minute oral lesson, the teacher simply listing the contributions on the blackboard.

Here is another Familiar Situation, similarly listing what is heard:

Storm

rain	chimney roaring
thunder	hurricane
roar	steady beat
wind howling	trees moaning
leaves blowing	sea-gulls crying
windows rattling	surf booming
trees bending	windows whistling
bushes rattling	gusts of wind
people hurrying	gusts of rain
water-spouts	trees scraping
dripping	curtains blowing
wet tires	branches falling

Again, listing only things heard:

School-room

voices	chairs moving
desk-covers	talking
questions	pointer squeaks
humming	footsteps
book	clock
pens	drawers opening
reading	whistling

²Originated and developed at the Language Arts Curriculum Center, in the Francis Parkman District, Boston.

³For details, see by the same author "Teaching Pupils to Think" in *The Packet* (D. C. Heath and Co.) for February, 1951.

pencils
dipping
shuffles
bells
visitors
filing in
pencil-s
rulers
monito
beating
whisper
pencils
clapping
running

Other
"things

hospital
football
Hallowe
Christma
parade

Les
held th
a keen
ing. W
less too
they no
each on
come av
and the
and in
training
find a w

The
quent r
"Boys a
listen w
wind at

pencils	telephone
dipping pens in ink	movements
shuffles	reciting
bells	closing books
visitors	kicks
filing in line	commands
pencil-sharpeners	singing
rulers	papers
monitors	writing
beating erasers	writing on boards
whispering	dancing
pencils breaking	buzzer
clapping erasers	tapping
running	light switch

Other Familiar Situations useful for
"things heard":

hospital	jungle
football game	traffic
Hallowe'en	shopping
Christmas	dentist's office
parade	

Lessons such as these (and they are held thrice weekly) soon develop in pupils a keen appreciation of the sense of hearing. Where hitherto boys and girls more or less took for granted the various senses, they now began to see a particular use for each one; so that after a little practice they come aware of new manifestations of life and the world, of phenomena of all kinds and in great multiplicity. And with such training directed towards "hearing," they find a whole new world.

The teacher, of course, must make frequent reference to the art of listening. "Boys and girls," she might say, "we must listen with both ears. We must hear the wind at night, or the rain beating against

the window. We must hear the fire-engines, or the whistle of a train. We must hear the rumble of thunder, or the roar of a plane. We must hear automobiles whizzing by, and children playing in the backyard. We must hear our mother's voice."

"What is there to hear as we walk through the park?" the teacher might say on some little excursion. "Oh, the voices of our companions, the distant cries of other children. Now a dog is barking. In yonder tree a harsh old crow is cawing. The birds are singing. There are blue jays, and of course sparrows, chattering. The wind is blowing softly through the trees and whispering across the grass. Far away an automobile horn is sounding and a church-bell clear and low. Is there nothing to hear?"

Thus, by means of Familiar Situations and other exercises, pupils will begin to understand that the art of listening contributes to "ideas" for composition. They learn that the world is indeed filled with great marvels, awaiting only attention to enrich their lives, and admirably suited for use in speaking and writing.

Let us, therefore, as teachers of composition, take advantage of some such training, so that in addition to the contributions of the other senses, the minds of boys and girls may be further exercised in this wonderful faculty—the art of listening.

What Values, Puppetry?

LOUISE BINDER SCOTT¹

In some of our periodicals, words read beautifully and theories tower loftily in the face of the classroom teacher who utters helplessly, "Yes, I know. Now tell me *how* to put those theories into practice. I am the one who works with children throughout the day. Give me something I can *use*."

It would seem that the speech therapist in the public school has this educational job to do, if she expects cooperation from the teacher in achieving an all-around speech program.

We are all concerned with helping children to produce and use acceptable speech. Were a hundred books with devices published, there would still be a shortage of materials applicable to the needs and desires of the teacher in the public school.

Some teachers have ingenuity in creating their own materials. Some have imagination in selecting and adapting published materials. Teachers are all speech teachers by example whether they are aware of it or not, and whether they want to be or not. A visual-auditory demonstration of techniques by a speech therapist is sometimes all that is needed to "set the spark" and perhaps to show the teacher she may be doing some of the things anyway.

Now, every teacher on primary level seems to like puppets. If her children have not been exposed to the fascinating creatures in the classroom, they have certainly watched the antics of Ollie, The

Wizard, and Beanie on television. Puppets are not new to children. They can serve a purpose in the classroom by stimulating the child's language development as well as effecting and affording release. They are a media for bringing about speech improvement and correction.

However, if there are no objectives in mind, puppetry can be a veritable waste of time, aside from serving as entertainment.

Too much has been said about speech in the form of play without explaining results that should follow. We who use puppetry and other dramatic devices must show that they do have a place when included in purposeful activity.

Puppets have a high interest value, providing situations where children can share. They may stimulate the amount of language so that speech can be improved and corrected.

One teacher used puppets for auditory training in sounds. If a child has a sound substitution, the "puppet" may hear and feel the sound before the child, himself, has caught the idea.

Jocco, the clown, can often do things the child cannot do.

Jocco was a puppet so gay.
On thumb and finger he had to stay.
And all that he could ever say
Was "ch, ch, ch!"

The teacher commented upon Jocco's ability to make a "train" sound. As soon as

¹Supervisor of Speech, San Marino, Cal., City Schools.

possible, the sound was carried over into words and sentences that had meaning for the child. Usually, the teacher's remarks were addressed to the puppet, rather than to the child. She said, "Jocco, we want to *hear* the interesting things you have to tell us." To the class she commented, "You know, if you keep your eyes on Jocco, he will do what you want him to do."

The teacher was cautious in using the word *say*. In the home, too much emphasis may have been placed upon *say*. The child could have a tendency to withdraw from the repetitious *say* which caused feelings of antagonism toward the speech situation. The teacher used *do* and *make* instead.

This same teacher had a lesson on safety. The child fitted a puppet onto his hand and directed traffic. He discovered that *red* light was not *wed* light, nor was *green*, *gween*. Certainly a policeman needed to make good "r" sounds. This matter was called to the attention of the group and there was less likelihood of the child's feeling self-conscious.

The child with a monotone or the little mumbler is always eager for his puppet to succeed. It bears repeating that the puppet can many times accomplish something the child cannot do. But we must be dismayed if the child reverts to the old pattern when the puppet is laid away on the self. Carry-over is not so simple as that. Gradually, the child may transfer the puppet's success to his own speech.

He learns that his classmates will listen more attentively if they can hear him. Since they must be considered, there is the first lesson in *sharing*.

His classmates will also criticize him.

Children can be ruthless critics. This is where guidance on the part of the teacher should come into play. She can show by example how to criticize with a view to helping. "It is not *what* you say, but *how* you say it" is not too difficult a statement for even a five year old to grasp. Of course, a wise teacher will guide children into making their own standards. Even though she may introject her ideas, she should be subtle enough to let the children feel that they have had a part in setting criteria. We want a maximum of response and a minimum of teacher directed response. Confusing children with a list of do's and don't's may defeat the whole purpose of any program.

Before distributing puppets, it is well to demonstrate, though not to excess. The teacher should get away from being the "actor." Her level of performance is many times too high for children to attain. Her job is to *invite*, *encourage*, and stimulate performance and then stay in the background as much as possible.

Variety and voice placement can often be accomplished through puppetry. A child will instinctively use low placement for a papa bear and a high placement for a baby bear. He will learn that voice tells about the character speaking and we can hope for some carry over again.

The child who wants to entertain has progressed a step in communication, for he is now sharing. Too, the puppets furnish conversational material which can be shared at home with his parents.

The psychological values of puppetry are widely accepted. Puppetry effects release for the child and it tells us something

about the child, himself. When he puts on a hand puppet and expresses himself with no fears of criticism from the teacher, with no fears of consequences he may reveal the very feelings behind his baby talk or his stuttering. Once he loses himself and projects into the effigy, he may, under careful guidance of the teacher, expose insights, attitudes, guilts, and antagonisms. We can learn much about the environment that has created those feelings. He dares to work out the feelings on the effigy who may represent a member of his family and in so doing, he experiences relief. The wall of frustration shatters and when he sees that the teacher does not condemn his actions, he may continue this bombastic treatment on and on. Eventually, there will be a "tapering off" and possibly an acceptance of the person whom the effigy represents, provided the teacher or therapist directs the situation with carefully chosen words and maintains a permissive climate.

After psychological release, what then? The catharsis of violence may be supplanted by tolerance and understanding. After there has been transference of feeling, the child is better able to stand the emotions.

One teacher used paper sack puppets with the story about Waddles, a little duck, who refused to say "quack." She told the story first. Then children chose the characters they wished to dramatize.

Waddles' mother, father, brothers, and sisters were all worried because Waddles would not say "quack." He didn't talk. He didn't want to talk. Waddles decided to take a walk and find out how other barn-

yard inhabitants talked. Certainly, he could find a prettier language than "quack." After much observation, and listening to other sounds, Waddles realized that "quack" was not such a bad language after all.

Some of the questions posed for discussion were: "How did Waddles' mother feel when he wouldn't talk? How did other members of his family feel? What did they say? What did they do?"

The teacher learned much about modes of punishment used in the home, how the child felt about his own speech, and how his family reacted to it.

The Little Red Hen was used with stick puppets. Every child could have experience in saying, "I won't!" This simple sentence gave him a sense of importance. There were many varieties of "I won't's." The child learned that negativism gained nothing for the animals. Thus, there was a lesson in cooperation and responsibility. The child, himself, had taken responsibility and he felt good. The teacher trusted him enough to allow him to do something in his own way. He had helped to make the whole dramatization a success and he learned that life is not just "every man for himself."

Some children have trouble projecting themselves into an effigy. Many times, those same children have trouble in sharing, too. They are too deeply engrossed with themselves to make a puppet talk. Some kindergarten children can do little with a puppet except to hold it.

Manipulating a puppet and making it talk at the same time demands fine muscle coordination. However, puppetry can be

started
plified
Fin
puppe
finger
children
a finger
we can
good id
We ma
to stick
finally
a nurse
to work
knows
concent

cation to
guage w
for ideas
with resp
inquiry.
to appro
relations
obviously
agenda v
intent. T
teacher to
by what
on the se
learning
ance of g

started at this level provided it is simplified.

Finger play is actually a form of puppetry, for the child is using the finger for an effigy. Some kindergarten children have difficulty in bending down a finger and speaking simultaneously, so we can understand why it might not be a good idea to introduce puppets too soon. We may start with finger play, then go on to stick puppets, paper sack puppets, and finally hand puppets, themselves. Moving a nursery rhyme character on a stick seems to work well on this level, for a child knows the rhyme and does not have to concentrate upon words.

Puppetry challenges the ingenuity and the imagination of a teacher. The success depends upon how clearly she can visualize end results and how cleverly she can direct the project toward those ends. If she can get what she wants from puppetry, then it is worthwhile.

But she must understand that puppetry is *only one medium or device* in the voluminous "bag of tricks." To say, "This is it," may be one of the reasons why we fail to achieve overall results in our work and why some folks may not understand that perhaps we *are* accomplishing more than merely having a play period.

THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

(Continued from Page 206)

cation to truth running through it. All language work must be colored with respect for ideas, with respect for human dignity, with respect for freedom of thought and inquiry. The school must avoid seeming to approve the slick phrase, the "public relations angle," the synthetic sincerity so obviously related to cash return, the propaganda which flows from groups of evil intent. These things any school and any teacher teach by what they are, as well as by what they do; but the point does bear on the selection of content for children's learning experiences in language. Guidance of growth in speaking, reading, writ-

ing, and listening implies a choice of what to speak, read, and write about, and listen to. The school can go beyond value-neutral subjects and deal with experiences, both vicariously and in a real sense, which involve values. The school can emphasize honesty, courage, human understanding and sympathy, love, and beauty. Growth in the language skills must not be divorced from growth in those qualities of conscience and character which will give socially responsible direction to the use of the power that does reside in language; which will assure that that power will not be used for base or evil purpose.

Sixth Graders Work Toward Better Writing

DURLYN E. WADE¹

The group that entered my sixth grade that September came with a great dislike for anything that had to be written. These twenty-eight boys and girls were active and interested in all that was happening but they showed no interest in communicating their ideas in writing. Several experiences, in the early weeks of the term, made this clear to me. My suggestions that they might want to put on paper some of the interesting things they had done in their summer vacations went by without notice. The "sure" method of having them use some art media as a basis for a story fell flat. When I definitely stated that a story was wanted, they did their work, but such questions as the following were the ones raised by them: "Will one side of the page do?" "Is this enough?" or "How many pages do you want?" The interest and sparkle that other groups had shown when they wrote because they had something to say was definitely lacking.

When I suggested reports in social studies there were audible indications of displeasure. When I asked them to write a short paragraph using the new words we were having in spelling, they accepted the assignment without enthusiasm and interest. It became increasingly clear that they did not care to write.

One day we had a class discussion on our likes and dislikes. "Gee, I hate to take care of my little brother after school" said Sally. "Homework is the worst thing I hate." remarked Peter. Kenneth had his hand up and, as he had shown clear think-

ing on previous occasions, I was especially interested in what he would contribute to the discussion. "Mr. Wade" he began slowly, "I think school would be perfect if I didn't have to write so darn many reports or anything." His remark seemed to unleash many dammed up feelings about writing. All at once children began to talk: "Ugh, boy, did we have to write reports last term." "I don't like to write and I always had to copy my work over and over and I still did sloppy writing." "Yeah, I'm gonna get a typewriter or someone else to write for me this term." "Hay, Joe, maybe we can use some of the stuff we did last term over again." At this contribution I thought: "Now they are beginning to express how they really feel about writing. From all sides of the room came some reaction against having to write. In the minds of most of this class, writing was something teachers made children do for little if any reason.

In further conversations they showed their rebellious attitudes toward required reports and assigned stories and showed that from their point of view, especially in the area of writing, that excessive demands were made by teachers.

I knew that writing is an important tool. I knew also that if this group could get pleasure and develop interest in writing as a means of communication, they would be more successful; on the other hand, if they entered junior high school

¹Division of Education, New York State Teachers College, New Paltz.

with this extreme dislike for writing, they would find the adjustment to seventh grade more difficult.

I worked hard at developing and maintaining good rapport with the group. Since they disliked writing so much I was determined to take away the threat that it held for them and agreed to eliminate any required writing except when it was something for which the class decided to make a general responsibility.

The events which followed were exciting to experience. During the month of September there was only a bare minimum of writing. Instead of writing they talked a lot about what they were doing; in clubs, on the ball field, at dances, as well as discussions centering around topics involving their pets, the Dodgers, jets, flying saucers, and each other. I made every effort to provide opportunities for them to incorporate these types of small-group discussions into our day-to-day activities. Instead of writing about the experiences they had this past summer, they told about them. In art rather than write a story to interpret what they had created, they took their pictures and made up extemporaneous talks with wonderfully fantastic stories. The group read widely and talked about their books. We questioned each other about this book or that. "Who wrote it?" "Why do you like this particular part?" "Why did you read it twice?" In one of these reading discussions I suggested that some people might wish to keep a record of their reading. I explained how a book card was used for this purpose. Carol and Anne asked if they could start their own

card. As they began, I was interested that Thorolf showed interest in doing something like this. He asked if I intended marking these cards. When I told him I did not, that it was for a record and that anyone could use it, he wanted to start one. Thorolf was one of the poorest readers in the group. Part of his disability was undoubtedly due to the fact that English was a secondary language at home. Records also indicated that his vision needed corrective treatment. When Thorolf began to keep a reading card a ripple of agreement ran through the group as several others decided that writing in this way was not objectionable. This brief outline type of written record was the extent of our writing through October. Our social studies reports were given orally and I made no demands to have the group do written work. I knew that in order for individuals to make oral reports they would have to do written work. I knew that in order for individuals to make oral reports they would have to take notes but I did not set up any required procedure which would involve writing.

During this month of October we began developing a social studies unit planned around the concept that people are interdependent. Newspaper headlines printed accounts of flying saucers; jet aircraft from nearby airfields roared over our heads; and the local railroad was threatened by a strike. Discussion of these events in our sharing periods helped create interest in a unit on transportation. Concurrently there was much discussion in the newspapers and on the radio about the principle of collective vs. unilateral se-

curity as it was being resolved in Paris by the foreign ministers of the several nations in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

During our work period one day we planned for three committees which would act as sources of "expert" information on the three areas of transportation we were to study. Committees on air, sea, and land were organized. These groups accepted the responsibilities of learning as much about their particular subject as possible so that they could answer some of the questions they had raised. Each committee was asked to keep the class informed concerning what they were doing. Certain problems needed to be solved. These problems helped furnish direction for each group. "What types of transportation are used to travel on (land-sea-air)?" "What is the historical story behind these means of travel?" "Who were the men who helped develop these machines?" "What did each do?" "Where did these men come from?" "How has each particular means of transportation affected the way men live?" "As new means of transportation develop what happens to our world?" these are some of the types of questions we planned for each committee to answer.

After beginning some of the initial planning and exploration of the unit, we met as a class to study some of the methods for doing classroom research. We talked about how we find information and discussed some of the possible ways of sharing our findings with others. In one of these class discussions, Jim, a member of the sea transportation committee raised his hand. "Gee, all we ever get are stories and pictures of boats. My father is a travel agent and he sees boats everyday. Do you

think we could ever get to visit a large ship?" he questioned. The rest of the committee supported this plea. I had preliminary information to suggest that a trip to New York City for this purpose was a possibility. After some further discussion of Jim's idea, I explained that I thought it was a very good suggestion, but that I was very busy taking graduate courses which took up all of my time out of school. I continued saying that such a trip would require a great amount of preparation and careful planning and that I wouldn't have the time. This was accepted as a minor problem for them. They assured me that they could get all the details taken care of if I were willing to cooperate. They were sure their mothers would be pleased to help in such a field trip.

The following day we outlined on the board the reasons why we thought such a trip would be helpful and what we would need to do before we could complete the arrangements. Letters had to be sent home to the parents explaining what we wanted to do and why it was important for us to visit a large steamship. The various steamship companies had to be written to in order to determine if they would allow us to visit a ship. We needed to collect information on the best ways of traveling to the city, cost of transportation and lunch, in addition to securing the help of six parents who would accompany us. The details then needed to be discussed with the entire class, and finally, we needed to supply all of the parents with this information. Each child needed to have written consent of his parents in order that we might go. The children wrote letters, which the parent signed, giving permission

for the
the g
mitte
for an
trip.
neces
are de
The
visitin
about
my g
where
childr

N
was a
ticipat
rect fo
to par
ments
writing
tion, g
used a
fore w

Eac
writing
tion co
topic.
summa
tion to
ing for
ship co

The
that the
the liner
enthusia
from the
Althoug
letter be
suspense
Could a

for them to go on this school trip. Under the guidance of the sea transportation committee we discussed what we should look for and information we should gain on our trip. "Here are real opportunities for necessary writing," I thought, "And they are developing from their own planning." The goals of the group centered around visiting a steamship in order to learn more about the shipping industry but I saw that my goal of providing an environment where writing skills became essential to children could also be realized.

Now that the need for letter writing was apparent committee members participated wholeheartedly in learning a correct form for a business letter. The notes to parents explaining the final arrangements were written. As a part of all this writing came practice in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and organization. Children used a rough-copy which they edited before writing the finished form.

Each of the three committees began writing to addresses where free information could be obtained on their particular topic. The children learned to prepare summaries of their reading for presentation to the rest of the class. We were waiting for final confirmation from a steamship company.

The Cunard Steamship Line answered that they would be pleased to have us visit the liner, "R. M. S. Parthia." Interest and enthusiasm was high; however, Bill's reply from the Cunard Line provided the climax. Although they knew of the contents of his letter before school began they enjoyed the suspense of hearing Bill read it in class. Could a communication have more mean-

ing than this? Could a workbook or drill exercise in "make believe" provide the excitement or the motivation that the real experience supplied?

The trip to the Parthia was made during the Christmas holiday. It was filled with satisfaction for the children and for the adults. A world of new ideas, scenes never before seen by them, and opportunities to touch, feel, and smell the atmosphere of the docks were experiences they were able to bring back to the classroom.

The crew of the ship were English and the characteristics of their use of the English language fascinated the children. During the tour of the ship the children saw how electronic devices are used to guide the ship through the channel in the North River. They saw the kitchen and watched as the cooks prepared to feed the ships crew. Above decks they observed the way a ship is loaded. The cargo was lifted in huge nets from the nearby pier and lowered into the waiting hold. On the bridge the children questioned the Captain and First Officer about the running of the ship. They learned where it was constructed, the size of the crew, how fast it would go, and where it was bound for. Immigration and customs regulations were explained to them. The children questioned anyone who would talk to them. Only with regret did they finally descend the gangplank for the journey home.

For me, the children's teacher, it was gratifying to see that many children were beginning to overcome negative attitudes toward written work.

Many other outcomes to individuals resulted from the experiences in writing. Bill, was selected by the class to write the

letters to the Cunard Line. He greatly needed the attention and approval that this election gave him. Carol spent one entire afternoon re-writing her letter to the Maritime Commission requesting information. Peter, whose handwriting was very poor took extreme care in writing his letter to the Panama Steamship Company.

Through the use of the Community Resource File letters were sent to people in the village who were in the transportation business. One boy wrote to his father who directed a tug boat company. He wrote in behalf of the class, asking if Mr. M. would come to school and tell the class about his work. Having Mr. M. come to school for a morning and tell about the tug boat business was a valuable experience.

Upon returning to school after Christmas I decided that now might be the time when we should try for more extensive opportunities for writing. I had been careful not to assign written work, but now reopened the issue with the group. I asked if they remembered the discussion we had had in September about writing. They responded that they did. I raised a question as to whether they still disliked writing. They wanted to clarify my question: "Do you mean do I still hate to write reports?" "Do you mean the required type of writing or just writing in general?" And so it went. A few volunteered, "It's not so bad if you don't have to write all the time." "I don't mind writing if I don't have to write too long." "It's okay if I can make some mistakes in spelling." "Well, I still think writing's a waste of time." Reactions were mixed, obviously, but there was some support for it that had not been present in our initial discussions.

Some more evidence came to my attention during a parent conference with Mrs. L., Kenneth's mother, who told me of the great amount of writing he was doing at home. Kenneth was convinced, he later explained to the class, that he could write a better story than the one he had watched on television and was beginning to prove it. Raising his hand in class soon after my meeting with his mother, he asked, "You want to read something I wrote, Mr. Wade? I'm writing a book called 'Mutiny on the Elsinor.' I'll bring it in but I only have the first three chapters finished."

The comments of the group gave me some indication that they were ready to accept more active work in creating stories, poetry and plays. During the month of February some children began to write stories from a beginning sentence that I suggested. Some children began to write 'books' about a favorite character. They wrote short stories frequently placing their character in dangerous and exciting plots. Children who read the same book wrote short dramatizations of the story. Words used in rhyme from short poems the children wrote were used in constructing our weekly spelling test.

As more and more written work came from the children I had them record their best work in a writing folder. Here they kept samples of their stories as well as notes on written work done. During our planning periods the children began to provide for time to finish written work and write stories. In these periods I had an opportunity to work privately with individual children in a corner of the room and discuss the work they were doing. The

more
courage
correct
techni
childr
need
as val
they w
mistak

M
accust
someth
to pre
for so
and co
that sp
any fi
draft,

TH
come v
Miss I
graphe
top lib
was a
to info
read. I
reports
childre
books'
the gro
encour
to use
became

more capable children were ready for encouragement concerning improved form, correct spelling, and the importance of a technically correct final copy, while the children who worked at a slower rate needed to know that their stories were just as valuable and important even though they were short and held many mechanical mistakes.

More and more the children became accustomed to writing because they had something to say. It was important for me to prevent long re-write tasks especially for someone who would be discouraged and consider this another defeat. I agreed that spelling words needed to be correct in any finished product, but in the rough draft, misspellings were common.

The barrier of book reports was overcome when, with the help of our librarian, Miss Marr, we adopted a short mimeographed form which could be under a glass top library table for others to read. This was a voluntary report and was designed to inform others about a good book to read. In the social studies and science areas reports came much more slowly. A few children at a time began to make 'project books' which spread gradually to most of the group. The children needed continual encouragement in this area. They learned to use the library resources quite well and became competent in doing sixth grade

research. The committee reports and summaries from the unit on transportation varied in quality however they provided evidence that we later used to evaluate our unproved skill in writing.

The children made little progress in the skill of outlining. Since attention in seventh grade, to outlining would be given I knew this important aspect of writing would not be neglected and I did not risk threatening the newly won security in writing that the group seemed to be developing.

Throughout the spring term, the children continued to increase their independence in many areas of language. By the end of the year our classroom considered writing as an interesting activity. We had developed realistic standards which the children worked hard to satisfy. Of course, some children found it difficult to recognize their particular weaknesses, some reacted negatively to suggestions that more care be taken in preparing final copies of work. However, the general feeling against writing had really disappeared.

This group of sixth graders, like many others had needed experiences to help them see the satisfactions that can accrue when one uses writing as a tool of communications. And they had learned to like writing.

The Teacher and The Educational Article

AMY J. DE MAY¹

Why shouldn't the teacher write? Why shouldn't she tell some of her teaching experiences that will benefit others, some of the ways of teaching that show new ideas? Or why not make up a short story or novel based on things that happen to a teacher, to entertain as well as instruct? No one is as able to depict a teacher's kind of life so well as the teacher herself; for no one can tell of those experiences so well as the one who lives through them. In the case of fiction the writer must of course "dress it up" as life's doings set down "as is" contain too many routine dull happenings that are not entertaining; the writer has to leave out the dull parts. However, life experiences are the meat of stories, one's own as well as those of another, but seldom everything exactly as it occurred; one must omit much and play up the exciting parts to make the story interesting.

However, a teacher's strongest type of writing will be the actual work she is doing in the school room, the "*how to teach this*" type of article. When a teacher has worked out some method of procedure that is novel, that appeals to the pupils, and that produces desirable results, better results, shall we say, than methods she has previously obtained, some way that could be a help to other teachers, something that takes away the dullness which both teacher and pupils get to feel from the continuous repetition of the same thing in the same way, she should write that out for the benefit of others, and offer it to an educational magazine.

After I had been teaching several years, following the methods by which I myself had been taught, knowing no others, I became dissatisfied with the lack of interest in my pupils resulting from those ways of teaching. I began to see that these methods were dull for the pupil. When I studied the situation and saw a possibility of getting the results I wanted with more interesting methods, I began experimenting with different ways of teaching, at first fearfully and diffidently, expecting if I were found out I would be called to account. As nothing was said to me, I assumed with relief that what I was doing had not been noticed. Eventually it was, for my superintendent said to me, "You have ideas. I wish the other teachers had a few."

It was a long time before I thought of the possibility that what I had been doing would be considered valuable enough to be published in an educational magazine. But one day a book came to my attention which described in detail some of the various discoveries in arithmetic which I had made and used with success several years before this man's book was published. I said to myself, why hadn't I written that up at the time and been ahead of him, and sent it to a magazine? I did not even then suppose an educational magazine would even look at any work which I had done. I know now, of course, that just because of the fact that I was an humble grade teacher would not have prevented the accept-

¹Newark, New York.

ance of such an account. Later I did write out several teaching devices that had proved to be successful, but I was too diffident to mail them out.

Then one day while I was teaching a geography lesson the superintendent walked in and stayed throughout the lesson, finally taking out a notebook from his pocket and writing in it. This set me to trembling for fear he was noting some severe adverse criticism in his memorandum. It was therefore with gratified surprise that I heard him say to me, "That is the best lesson I have heard in a long time."

Thinking this statement over later I thought, if that lesson is so good, so unusually good, why not write out what went on in it and send it out? I did so and in as short a time as it was possible for the mail to take my envelope and return an answer the article was accepted. This I then followed with accounts of other lessons I was teaching and with children's plays I was working out with my class, so that in two years fourteen pieces were accepted for which I received a total of two hundred dollars. This I spent for an encyclopaedia which I wanted.

This was not much pay for the time and effort used in the process. One's income will not be greatly increased by this type of writing. The pay is small as compared to other types of writing even when one gets paid; and only a few educational magazines pay at all: you have to donate not only your time and skill, but also your paper, and postage both ways. If return postage—stamped addressed envelope—is not inclosed with the manuscript, your offering is not likely to be returned if re-

jected; and you cannot try it elsewhere for a long time even if you have the courage to do so. Now and then you will not get it back anyway; if you want to try again, after waiting a long time to make sure you will not have a reply, it is well to write a polite inquiry, which may or may not be answered. Eventually if you wish to try your luck elsewhere, you have to make a new copy from your carbon. You should always make a carbon copy to keep until you receive a copy of the magazine in which your article is published. Never send out a carbon copy, but you can make a new copy of your carbon, with such revisions as seem desirable. A carbon can be made with handwriting, but a satisfactory one requires a typewriter; and few pieces of any kind will be read by an editor that are not typewritten. No extra equipment will be of more value and comfort to a teacher than a portable typewriter, even if she never expects to write anything for publication.

One may now ask, if the remuneration is so small and there is often no pay at all, why go to the trouble and expense of writing and sending? Any one who has ever written anything will tell you that writing and copying are almost as tiring as teaching, even if it is a pleasure. But for several reasons such self-expression is good for you and your professional life. It provides an outlet for your professional ideas; it makes you strive harder to find ways to improve your teaching, keeping you from getting in a rut. Likewise it improves your professional prospects. Superintendents in other school systems read your accounts of what you have done. One article for which I received no pay got me a new position

(Continued on Page 231)

Learning Poetry "By Heart"

MARY GRAHAM LUND*

The heart has reasons that Reason knows not of.
Pascal

Our grandfathers used the quaint phrase, "learning by heart," for memorizing, but there has been little heart in the required memorization of poems, and the analytical methods of teaching poetry which our schools have seen and even approved in the past decades. It is time we really began to teach poetry by heart and not by mind. We know enough about psychology to do it. We should know enough about poetry.

Poetry is not an ornament of our culture; it is not primitive magic; it is not adolescent, or silly. It is a realm of experience which man is in danger of losing, if present methods of teaching literature continue. If taught as experience, as a means of orientation and emotional satisfaction, it is, says our foremost literary critic, I. A. Richards, "capable of saving us; it is a perfectly possible means of overcoming chaos."¹

Poetry answers the child's questions, "What?" and "Why?" as Science can not do. Science answers the mind, but poetry answers the heart. The child is not asking for knowledge, but for assurance. The adolescent accepts the "how's" of science, but his heart is troubled by unanswered "what's" and "why's." He needs the solace of poetry, the assurance of poetry, the transcendence and depth of poetry. He

*Sacramento, California.

¹I. A. Richards, *Science and Poetry* (In Schorer, Miles, and McKenzie, *Criticism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1948. p. 523)

needs this most when we have cut him off from the natural experiencing of poetry by our foolish methods of teaching it. We complain, as teachers, of the adolescent's dislike of poetry, forgetting that we are responsible for his mental block.

It began about the fifth grade. The child enjoys poetry. Before he goes to school, he talks in rhythm, sometimes in rhyme. He wants to hear Mother Goose over and over. Perhaps he carries the dog-eared volume to bed, along with the eyeless stuffed dog, and some grimy cards from a discarded deck (bridge or canasta, he's not particular). The primary teacher permits him to "make" poems and recite them to the class. She reads him poems, and furnishes him attractive volumes to browse in. But by the time he reaches the fifth grade, he "loses interest," the teachers say. Of course he loses interest in the baby stuff he enjoyed in the lower grades! The interest is still there, but the teacher doesn't know what to do about it. She is pretty busy with fractions, and socializing recitations, and building resources units around community interest, etc., etc. (to say nothing of tests and graphs and profiles and personal interviews) to think much about poetry. Once in a while her conscience bothers her and she reads a poem to the class and tries to explain it; or perhaps she asks the children to bring their favorite poems to the class; or she decides to "work up" a choral reading for a PTA program.

What is wrong with these activities?

Maybe
deal w
poetry
convey
British
pointed
loves p
than th
his own
it to t
that th
haps al
er won
with a
ing a
transfe
own be
ver pla
blue! E
it, perh
chance
of "pre
not leav
There i
covery.

The
vorite
must be
terials t
of valu
tape rec
haps re
avoid a
sound c
imitatio
imitatio
bad, ev
same ru
stage fo
imitatio
L. A. C
Time, 5

Maybe nothing. But there could be a good deal wrong. The teacher who "likes poetry" does not necessarily know how to convey her liking to pre-adolescents. The British novelist, L. A. G. Strong, once pointed out that the teacher who "just loves poetry" may be a greater menace than the one who hates it. For he fastens his own emotions on the poem, and blasts it to the class, with the probable result that they will hate that poem, and perhaps all poetry, forever.² Perhaps a teacher wonders why Bill looks out the window with a bored expression while she is reading a beautiful poem. Well, you can't transfer experience. Bill has to find his own beautiful poem. Maybe it's that silver plane just emerging from the upper blue! Bill should have time to think about it, perhaps to write about it, certainly a chance to "find" a poem about it. Instead of "presenting" poems to the class, why not leave them around to be "discovered"? There is fun in exploration and joy in discovery.

There is nothing wrong with the "favorite poem" technique, except that it must be prepared for. There must be materials to choose from, and some discussion of values in reading poetry aloud. The tape recorder will be useful here, and perhaps records will help. We must both avoid and encourage imitation. Does that sound crazy? Well, we must avoid slavish imitation, but remember that all art is imitation that is spontaneous can not be bad, even though it may be obvious. The same rule holds in choric reading. Set the stage for spontaneity, but do not penalize imitation.

²L. A. G. Strong, "How to Dislike Poetry," *Time*, 50: 73-74, September 15, 1947.

There are so many interesting approaches to poetry: free reading, rhythm exercises, rhythm graphs and charts, choral reading, group writing of free verse, or even of patterned verse, paintings and music, the practice of the graphic arts (such as finger paintings or collage to illustrate poems or sensory impressions), program planning, publication in simple ways (such as mimeographing, or scrapbooks, or bulletin boards). Surely, by some of these methods, the teacher should be able to keep open the channels of the child's awareness of beauty. Every normal individual possesses sensibilities to beauty, to joy and pain, to love and hate. Each person must learn how to handle his own emotional awareness, how to use it for his own personal happiness, and for the good of others. Too often, in the past, the answer has been to dull these sensibilities, to block the avenues of experience. Well meaning adults and the circumstances of daily living shut off many approaches to zestful living before the youth has the power to defend them.

Are we afraid of using one of the most vital experiences of life in the experience curriculum? A few teachers every year for the past three decades have experimented with teaching poetry creatively, and have reported the results of their experiments in educational journals. Why have those experiments not resulted in some body of method, some enrichment of instructional materials, some philosophy, at least? Is it that we have not been convinced of the value of poetry?

I. A. Richards, in one of his earlier books, *Science and Poetry* (1926), asks what one would recommend to a friend

who had but one hour to live as the most enjoyable activity. He argues that, setting pain aside, torpor would be the worst choice. "The best life . . . will be one in which as much as possible of himself is engaged (as many of his impulses as possible) . . . The more he lives and the less he thwarts himself, the better." And Richards concludes that the answer is the "experience of poetry."³ Max Eastman says that "to read in practical language is to be told, but to read poetry is to learn by experience."⁴

The feeling inspired by looking at a painting, hearing a musical recording, listening to a poem, is not easily explainable. It is akin to the curious elation accompanying a creative act, such as building a model airplane, "finding" a tune on one's favorite musical instrument, putting words together to make sensuous sounds

³*Criticism*, p. 512

⁴Max Eastman, *Enjoyment of Poetry*, p. 131. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947.

and images. There is a feeling of power accompanying apprehension of an art form. The experience is an ordering of past experiences, at least to the extent of apprehension. That is the province of art. The study of poetry should be a deep and free psychic experience which will help the pupil arrange the contradictory data of his personal experiences into a more satisfying pattern, which will help him to distinguish between feeling and thinking.

Discipline? Yes, the mind and heart need discipline, but not the disciplines of suppression and restriction that lead to self-enslavement and mental imbalance. We need the discipline of moral order, of conciliation of innate impulses with the hard facts of science. A few rare individuals in all ages have been able to experience such a moral ordering, for a brief time, at least. The records of these moments are poetry. How may we teach our students to enjoy these vicarious experiences?

A Classified Index of Tests and Reviews in Fourth Mental Measurements Yearbook (by Oscar K. Buross) is free to teachers who request it from the Gryphon Press, Highland Park, New Jersey. The booklet will serve as handy reference as to what language arts standardized tests are available (it lists 29 in English, 2 in composition, 17 in literature, 14 in spelling, 6 in vocabulary.)

Dis
of a ter
tarded
are reac
instanc
children
dren in
attitude
underta
school
classified
In Scho
Delawa
in grade
ers as h
In Scho
25 per
to 6, we

Read
legedly
objective
was don
child by
assumed
tarded
tribution
retardati
Index (

¹Univers
²In Scho
MA obta
telligence
language
tal Matur
from the
B from t

The Reading Status Of Children Classified By Teachers As Retarded Readers

RALPH C. PRESTON¹

Discerning educators have long been aware of a tendency among teachers to classify as retarded in reading certain children who actually are reading up to the level of capacity. In many instances, teachers exert a pressure upon such children which proves frustrating to the children in question and destructive of wholesome attitudes toward reading. An analysis is here undertaken of the reading of 82 elementary-school children from two schools who were classified by their teachers as retarded readers. In School A, located in a city in the State of Delaware, 15 per cent of the total enrollment in grades 3 to 5 were designated by their teachers as having pronounced reading retardation. In School B, located in a suburb of Philadelphia, 25 per cent of the total enrollment in grades 2 to 6, were so designated.

Retardation as Determined by Reading Index

Reading Indices were computed for the allegedly retarded children in order to secure an objective standard of reading retardation. This was done by dividing the reading grade of each child by his mental grade.² An Index of .80 was assumed to be a reasonable point separating retarded readers from normal readers. The distribution of children whose teacher-designated retardation was not confirmed by the Reading Index (that is, whose Indices did not fall be-

low .80) is presented in Table 1.³ An examination of Table 1 show that the teachers classified many more children as retarded than appears justified. In School A, 43 per cent of those children designated by their teachers as retarded were found, in terms of their capacity, to be normal readers. In School B, 60 per cent of the teacher-designated retarded group were found, in terms of capacity, to be normal readers. (On the other hand, it is of interest to note that eight pupils in School B who were identified as retarded by the Reading Index were identified as *normal* readers by their teachers.)

In passing, may be pointed out that Table 1 indicates that teachers in the lower grades tended to make more lavish overestimates of the incidence of retardation than did upper grade teachers. Average percentages for both schools of overestimation of retardation are as follows: Primary teachers (grades 2 and 3), 70 per cent; Intermediate teachers (grades 4, 5, and 6), 43 per cent.

Retardation and Intelligence

The distribution of retarded readers according to intelligence is presented in Table 2. It will be noted that most of the bona fide cases of

³Pupils who were reading at or above grade level are not here regarded as retarded even if the Indices fell below .80. To be sure, some would argue that they too should be classified as retarded. But since such pupils are able to handle reading material prepared for the average child of the grade in which they have been placed, and since all of them have made steady, average progress and have never had to repeat a grade, this argument seems to the writer to stem from a rather unrealistic and artificial concept of retardation.

¹University of Pennsylvania.

²In School A, mental grade was computed from MA obtained from the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Tests, and in School B from the non-language portion of the California Test of Mental Maturity. Reading scores in School A are from the Iowa Every-Pupil Test and in School B from the California Reading Test.

TABLE 1. PUPILS WHOSE TEACHER-CLASSIFIED RETARDATION IS NOT CONFIRMED BY READING INDEX

School A Grades					School B Grades				
3 (N=16)	4 (N=13)	5 (N=18)	Total (N=47)	2 (N=3)	3 (N=8)	4 (N=9)	5 (N=10)	6 (N=5)	Total (N=35)
N 11	5	4	20	2	6	6	5	2	21
% 69	38	22	43	67	75	67	50	40	60

(N's in parentheses describe total numbers of children classified by their teachers as retarded.)

retardation were average in intelligence or above average. In contrast, 70 per cent of the incorrectly teacher-classified pupils in School A and 24 per cent of the incorrectly teacher-classified pupils in School B were below average in intelligence.⁴

Retardation and Reading Achievement Scores

The great majority of pupils (*all* of them in School A) who were apparently mistakenly called retarded by their teachers were lagging behind grade norms of reading achievement. See Table 3. Indeed, the teachers acknowledged that reading achievement scores in relation to a child's school grade (and irrespective of his mental capacity) was an important criterion

⁴The mean IQ for the total population of each school was in the upper portion of the average range of intelligence.

used by them in judging reading retardation. They also acknowledged that a child who has difficulty in reading material prepared for his grade-level (and irrespective of his mental capacity) was usually classified by them as retarded.

Another factor operated among these teachers in mislabeling pupils. A child might lag in reading achievement (as measured by silent reading comprehension), but if he was skillful in oral reading, he had a good chance of receiving an inflated evaluation. It will be noted from Table 3 that eighteen lagging pupils in School B were classified by their teachers as normal readers. A check with these teachers concerning these eighteen children revealed the fact that, in almost every instance, the child was a fairly successful oral reader and that the teachers used this fact in preference to silent reading performance as a criterion of normality.

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF RETARDED READERS ACCORDING TO IQ

Wechsler IQ Classification	School A		School B	
	RETARDED By Reading Index	READER'S Dubiously classified by teachers*	RETARDED By Reading Index	READER'S Dubiously classified by teachers*
Very superior (128+)	—	—	5	1
Superior (120-127)	—	—	2	—
Bright normal (111-119)	2	—	5	4
Average (91-110)	15	6	10	11
Dull normal (80-90)	9	8	—	2
Borderline (66-79)	1	5	—	3
Defective (65 & below)	—	1	—	—
Total	27	20	22	19

*Teacher-designed retarded readers whose retardation was confirmed by Reading Index not included.

TABLE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS
ACCORDING TO READING ACHIEVEMENT

Reading Achievement	Retarded readers dubiously classi- fied by teachers*	Retarded readers dubiously classi- fied by teachers*	Classified as normal readers by teachers†
6 mos. or more in advance of grade	—	1	55
From grade to 6 mos. in advance of grade	—	5	30
From 6 mos. below grade to grade	—	8	11
Lower than 6 mos. below grade	20	7	7

*Teacher-designated retarded readers whose retardation was confirmed by Reading Index not included.

† Comparable data not available for School A.

Conclusions

1. Teachers in the two schools studied exhibited a tendency to classify more children as retarded readers than is justified in light of the children's mental capacities. The estimate of each teacher was considerably higher than an estimate based on the Reading Index.

2. The percentage of overestimation of reading retardation was considerably higher in the primary grades than in the intermediate grades.

3. Some teachers, while exaggerating the incidence of retardation, also regarded certain actually retarded readers as normal readers.

4. The teachers were inclined to consider failure to read material prepared for the grade in question and failure to achieve up-to-grade

scores on standardized reading tests as constituting retardation, irrespective of a child's mental capacity.

5. Some of the teachers were inclined to consider skill in oral reading a better criterion of reading normality than skill in silent reading.

6. There is doubtless a need in many schools for greater consideration of the fact that lagging reader's mental ability is a more reasonable standard for judging reading retardation than a child's ability or inability to read material prepared for the grade in which he is placed. While a child's mental age may be a low estimate of his ability, its use will save many a child from the damaging effects of unrealistically high expectations with the ensuing pressures, frustrations, and needless sense of failure.

A revised edition of the *Annotated List of Phonograph Records* has been issued by the Children's Reading Service. The new edition lists only unbreakable records.

The 1953 catalog, edited by Dr. Warren S. Freeman, presents about 1000 recordings from many record companies, arranged by subject areas and grade groups. Recordings are listed not only for music, but also for language arts, science, and social science from kindergarten through senior high school.

Each listing in the catalog includes the title, composer, recording artist, available speeds (33, 45, 78 rpm), price for each speed, size, and a description.

Copies of the *Annotated Lists of Phonograph Records* may be obtained from the Children's Reading Service, 1078 St. John's Place, Brooklyn 13, N. Y. Ten cents for postage and handling. All prices include school discount.

A Puppet Play-Modern Version

NAOMI GARNER¹

"The Three Little Pigs"

a

Puppet Play for Marionettes

by

Naomi Garner

Characters

Old Reynard — The sly old fox.

Rex — The tallest little pig.

Runt — The littlest little pig.

Ron — The fattest little pig.

Time — Time of Fantasy.

Scene 1 — In an open field.

Scene 2 — In another open field.

Scene I

A log is lying in the center of the stage.

Old Reynard, the fox, comes swaggering in from left (give the walk a characteristic movement so the pigs can imitate it) and growling curses upon the little pigs.

REYNARD: Gr-gr-gr- I'm so mad I could just explode. And I'm tired and hungry and disgusted. (Puts one foot upon the log.) Curses upon those little pigs, Rex, Ron, and Runt. (Stepping over the log.)

They are the biggest blockheads I have ever seen. They can't remember a thing. Last week I told Ron, the fattest of the three little pigs, plainly and simply that I'd be by for him at seven a. m. to go to Farmer Brown's orchard to gather apples. But when I reached his home, he was nowhere to be found, so I went on to the orchard

alone. When I came in sight of the orchard, there that dumb Ron was, sitting in the top of the tallest tree, munching apples. As soon as I was within hearing distance, I shouted in my sweetest voice, although I was very angry, "How charming you look up there, Ron. Won't you throw me an apple?" He squealed back, "Surely, I'll try, but I don't suppose I could throw an apple or anything that far. But as I say, I'll try. Look out. Here comes the nicest one in the tree." Whizz! Zipp! He threw that apple so hard that it zoomed past me like a jet bullet. In fact he threw it so far, I must have spent at least five minutes going after it and bringing it back; for after I, all out of breath, had rushed back to that apple tree, from which I was sure Ron would be picking apples, he had climbed down out of that tree and had completely disappeared. When I went to his home and rang the door bell, he didn't answer. If I hadn't been so tired, I would have huffed and puffed until I blew his house in right then. But since I didn't know for sure he was in there, I decided it would be easier to have one of Mr. Massey's nice fat hens for dinner that day. And that is just what I had. Fannie, my wife, was very unhappy though, because she was sure we would have pork chops.

(Sits down on log. He thinks a while, then continues.)

¹ Assistant Professor of English, Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, Kansas.

I don't know whether those pigs are dumb or whether they are just plain dishonest. Runt and Rex promised to go with me to the fair today. And although I went to their homes two hours earlier than the appointed time, they were not there; and they never did come. Finally I started on to the fair alone. I nearly lost my life going up Banburry hill. I saw that rolling barrel just in time to jump out of the way as it whizzed past me like a jet bullet from Mars. After I reached Bluberry Fair, I looked everywhere for them; but they absolutely weren't at the fair today. Where they were, I'll probably never know. (Pauses as if thinking.) But what makes me really angry is Ron's outtricking me not more than a half hour ago; and after all my huffing and puffing to blow his house in, too. Well, at least, his house is in shambles, and I won't have to be bothered blowing his house in again soon. Gr-gr-r-r-r. I can forgive the three little pigs for being forgetful, but I can't forgive myself for being so stupid. (growling) I hate myself!

(Sits a few seconds, just thinking.)

(Getting up) Oh well, no use crying over spilled milk. I'll just walk over yonder a half mile to one of Farmer Jone's alfalfa stacks and wait until one of his hens goes to roost. Then I'll catch one of them for supper. (Going off, he adds) Fannie, my wife, won't like chicken for supper, especially after she had it only yesterday; but she'll have to make out this time, even though she has her mouth all set for fresh ham and tenderloin.

(Curtains may be drawn and opened to designate the passing of time.)

Scene II

Two little pigs come dancing in from right to the tune of "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf" —(they hum it).

REX: Boy! That churn came in handy!
(Laughs)

RUNT: Yes, didn't it. (Both laugh, Runt begins singing the chorus of "The Big Bad Wolf". Rex joins in and they both sing the first stanza of the song and the chorus. They begin laughing and laugh so hard that they have to sit on the log.)

RON enters running and panting.

RON: (Between breaths) What—are—you—two—so—tickled about?

REX: We outricked old Reynard today!

RON: You did?

REX and RUNT: Yes!

RON: (Very haughtily) Well, so did I.
(REX and RUNT bending over and laughing very lustily.)

RON: (Disgusted) Well, will you porkers please stop laughing and tell me about your amusing experience.

RUNT: Yes, Rex bought a huge round churn at the fair today and we had to carry it home.

REX: But a churn can be used for things other than making butter.

RUNT: Yes, a churn is a wonderful means of transportation. (They both laugh.)

RON: A churn used for a wagon. I've never heard of such a thing.

(From here on, one speech after another must follow in rapid-fire order but the words must be spoken slowly and distinctly.)

REX: Well, if perchance you were trudging home from the fair carrying a churn...

RUNT: And if perchance, as you reached the top of a long hill, you saw way in the distance Reynard the fox swaggering up the road in his most hateful manner...

REX: And if perchance you had visions of yourself on Mr. Fox's table in the form of a juicy roast pig...

RUNT: Perhaps your brain might start clicking!

REX: Then you might use a churn for a wagon.

RUNT: We did! (They laugh with great satisfaction and enjoyment.)

RON: (Very emphatically and disgustedly) Again I say: Will you two stop your laughing and talking in riddles, get down to business, and tell me exactly what happened?

RUNT: Sure! Sure! You remember Rex and I had a nine o'clock appointment to go with Reynard, the fox, to the fair today, don't you?

RON: Yes.

REX: Well, we just surmised old Reynard had some trap set to catch us, so we decided to go early to the fair, do our shopping, and come home before old Reynard was even out of bed.

RUNT: But we didn't quite get the job done.

REX: No, but we did get to the fair; we did get our shopping done.

RUNT: Yes, we bought a churn. (laughs)

REX: And we were coming happily on our way home, until we reached the top of Banbury Hill. As we came over the summit of Banbury, we

looked toward the foot of the hill and whom did we see trotting up the road but Old Reynard, the fox.

RUNT: In our consternation, the only solution we could think of was to get inside the churn, and roll down the hill, unseen by Reynard. So hurriedly we yanked the lid off...

REX: We jumped in...

RUNT: And closed the lid...

REX: And went rolling, clatterty-bang down the hill.

RUNT: We would have rolled right over Old Reynard, but he saw our mysterious transportation just in time to jump out of the path of the flying churn. The old coward was so frightened that he ran away yelling. When our churn stopped rolling somewhere near the foot of the hill, we were able—in spite of our bruised bodies and swimming heads—to lift the lid slightly and peek out. Old Reynard was nowhere to be seen. I bet he ran over that hill faster than he ever did before in his life. And for all I know he may be running yet!

RON: No, he's not running yet.

REX & RUNT: Where is he? (In fright.)

RON: The last time I saw him he was lying on the south side of Crosley's Grove under a big elm, sound asleep.

REX: Did you see him?

DON: Did I see him! Yes, and it's a miracle that I'm not old Reynard's supper.

RUNT: Why?

RON: Old Reynard blew my straw house in this evening, captured me, put me in a bag and started to carry me home for his and his wife Fanny's supper.

REX: You don't say!

RUNT: How did you escape?

RON: That was easy. I knew old Reynard was lazy and would stop some place to rest, so I began cutting a hole in the bag as high up on the bag as I could reach. Sure enough, the old murderer did get tired, he did put the bag down, but he didn't see the hole.

REX: But did he fall asleep?

RON: Yes, and then I cut the hole a tiny bit bigger, slipped out, put in a rock, ran away as fast as I could, and here I am.

RUNT: Fine! (Begins singing again "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf".

Rex and Ron join in. All three are sitting on the log enjoying themselves when Reynard the fox slips up from behind and is just ready to grab the pigs when they hear his growls. They look around, jump up, and run out, right. Reynard trips on the log while trying to catch them.)

REYNARD: Curses and more curses. Oh! Oh! Oh! (Like a howl.) I've sprained my ankle! The pigs have escaped again! And now I won't even be able to catch one of Mr. Massey's roosters for my supper. (Howls, as if in pain.)

THE TEACHER AND THE EDUCATIONAL ARTICLE

(Continued from Page 221)

with an *increase* of twenty-five dollars a month, which is, my friends, two hundred fifty dollars a year! The superintendent told me he hired me because of what he had read in my articles in teachers' magazines. It wasn't long before no matter where I went in any gathering of teachers every one I met knew about my writings. Later I secured another position which was a decided advance professionally over what I had been doing, and then I was no longer a grade teacher. This superintendent said, "I want a teacher in my system who can accomplish what you have been doing, as indicated by the articles you have written."

There are of course a few qualifications that are necessary if you think of writing anything for publication in teacher's magazines: You must enjoy your teaching; you must have a mental eye out for improving your work, to make it constantly more interesting and profitable for your pupils;

you must be able to express yourself clearly so that there is no ambiguity in your description; you must be able to pick out essential points and play them up. After all this, you must have tests, preferably approved standard tests, to provide proof that what you have been doing brings better results than ordinary methods of teaching. Your writing must have freshness and vigor. Not least of all, you must be willing to forego some of your recreation to have the time to write and to have energy enough to write after an exhausting, perhaps a trying, day in the school-room with a class of thirty-five to forty-five pupils, some of whom have exasperating dispositions.

In spite of all this I can say from experience that such writing is soul-satisfying, and worth while. Try it and see. It is no lazybones' job; but it does yield thrills.

An Experiment with Films, Film-Readers, and The Magnetic Sound Track Projector

PAUL WITTY AND JAMES P. FITZWATER¹

Various claims are made concerning the value of film experience in fostering the acquisition of skill in reading. The positive values of films in motivating children and in heightening their interest in reading are generally recognized. But the extent to which the film experience can promote the acquisition of skills is unestablished since few experiments have been designed to study this problem. It has been observed that many first grade children, who have been slow in learning, have made rapid progress in the reading of materials associated with films they have seen. Indeed, entire classes of first and of second grade pupils have made extraordinary progress in reading books designed to accompany one set of eight films.²

It appears that the film experience may foster the attainment of skill in reading. Not only does it provide opportunity for pupils to see pictures of objects and situations referred to by written symbols, but it also enables them to hear the correct pronunciation of words and phrases in a meaningful setting. These activities are undoubtedly valuable in the development of skill in meaningful reading.

This paper presents an experiment in exploring the relationship of film experience to the acquisition of skill in silent reading.

Subjects Used

Second grade children in six Chicago schools were used as subjects. The average number of pupils in each school who took the test was 27, with a range in number from 10 to 41. The experiment was conducted for a single semester during the second half of the school

year 1951-52. For the first half of the experiment, the children were instructed according to the regular program in which basal readers and supplementary materials were employed. During the second half of the semester, the children in each group saw and heard four films made by Encyclopedia Britannica Film Company;³ after seeing each film, they read the associated film-reader. Lessons were carefully planned and included word-study, discussion, and related reading.

All pupils were given a standardized silent reading test at the beginning, at the mid-point, and at the end of the semester. Interest inventories were administered at the beginning and at the end of the semester, and questionnaires pertaining to their pupils' development were filled in by the teachers. A special magnetic sound track recording projector⁴ furnished by ¹Northwestern University: Appreciation is expressed to Dr. Paul Pierce (Assistant Superintendent of Schools) and the principals, psychologists, and teachers in the six schools for their generous cooperation. The writers wish to acknowledge the assistance of Theodore Stolarz and William Cooper in assembling and interpreting the data.

²*It's Fun to Find Out Series*, published by D. C. Heath and Company, based on Encyclopedia Britannica Films.

³The following films were used: *Three Little Kittens*, *Shep the Farm Dog*, *The Grey Squirrel*, *A Day at the Fair*, *The Mailman*, *The Fireman*, *The Food Store*, and *Farm Animals*.

⁴This projector plays the regular sound track of the film and can also be used to record on a magnetic coating another sound track. This coating in no way interferes with the normal use of the film and gives the user an opportunity to record anything he wishes.

the Bell and Howell Company was used to record certain aspects of the language development of the children.

Three forms, primary level, of *The California Reading Test* were used in the experiment.⁵ The *Kuhlman-Anderson Test of Mental Ability* and the *Northwestern University Interest Inventory (revised)* were also administered to each pupil.

Since the film and film-reader experience was substituted for the basal reading program during the second half of the semester, comparisons of progress in reading made during the first and the second half of the semester will disclose to some extent the relative effectiveness of the two approaches in promoting development in reading. The first half of the semester may thus be regarded as the control period and the second half as the experimental period.

The writers are fully aware of some of the obvious limitations in this approach. However, since the film and film-reader experience was substituted for the regular program, the data will be indicative of results obtained under two distinctly different approaches to reading in which decidedly different materials of instruction were used.

Treatment of Test Results

The results of the reading tests were employed to determine the extent of the pupils' growth during the period of regular instruction and during the period when the films and film readers were used. When the tests were assembled at the end of the experiment, the following steps were taken:

1. The tests were "matched" so that there were three tests for each child. This process reduced the size of the group since children were eliminated if they missed *any one of the three tests*.

2. The tests were scored and the averages were computed for each class. Comparisons were then made between the averages at the beginning, at the midpoint, and at the end of the second half of the semester.

The responses of pupils and of teachers to inventories and questionnaires were assembled during the experimental and the control period.

Results of the Experiment

After the tests were scored, it was found that the primary level of the *California Reading Test* was too easy for many of these second grade pupils. This may be due to the nature of the test or to the selection of relatively superior schools for the experiment. Since the poorest of these schools yielded some perfect scores on parts of the tests when the second form was administered, it appears that the norms may be too low for pupils in the Chicago schools. Moreover, the material included in the test may be inadequate to measure the full range of ability even in the school having the lowest I.Q.'s. The average I.Q. of the six schools was 108.

The problem presented by this limitation of the test was very great. After considerable deliberation, it was decided, for evaluation purposes, to eliminate consideration of any section or any sub-test when half or more of the pupils in any class made perfect scores on taking the second form of the test. (See Table I.) Comparisons in each school were made on the remaining items in which growth might be revealed during the experimental period. Total test scores were also considered in every school. Admittedly, this procedure is unreliable; nevertheless the results are interesting and provocative.

⁵This test consists of two sections on reading vocabulary and reading comprehension including the following items: Section I Word Form, Word Recognition, and Meaning of Opposites; Section II Following Directions, Directly Stated Facts, and Interpretations.

TABLE I
Grade Averages for Total Reading Scores
on California Reading Test

School	No. Students	Feb.	April	June	No. of perfect Sub-test scores in April
1	10	2.7	3.5	3.6	4
2	18	3.2	3.6	3.9	12
3	30	2.3	2.8	3.3	11
4	24	3.3	3.8	4.2	21
5	36	3.0	3.5	3.8	21
6	41	2.9	3.3	3.6	21

In School I, there was only a small number of pupils, half of one class, who were available for this study. Four of these ten pupils made maximum scores on some subtests in April. Thus the opportunities of the group to show gains during the experimental period were

greatly limited. However, on the test called "Following Directions," only one pupil made a perfect score in February. On this test, the following status according to grade norms was achieved:

Subtest D. Following Directions (Grade equivalent)	February	April	June
	3.1	3.4	3.8

Despite the fact that, at the time of the second test, four pupils made perfect scores, a large gain was demonstrated during the experimental period. Such analyses led to the conclusion that, in this school, greater gains were made during the experimental period.

In School II, the test results were of doubtful value because of the fact that there were so many maximum scores. Since the average total score at the beginning was equal to the

norm for grade 3.2, it is apparent that this test could not reveal additional gains accurately for this group of second grade pupils. Yet on those parts of the test in which there was an opportunity for considerable gain to be made, the pupils did demonstrate marked improvement during the experimental period. For example, the vocabulary section of the test yielded the following grade equivalents:

Section 1. Reading Vocabulary (Grade equivalent)	February	April	June
	2.8	3.2	3.6

Although data were obtained on all three tests for 30 children in School III, there were difficulties in making reliable comparisons. Yet a pattern transpired which appeared also in the other three schools. On the first section of the test, the pupils made many perfect scores in April and their scores were very high in the

initial testing. Accordingly, there was little opportunity for gains to be made, especially during the experimental period.

On the Reading Comprehension Section, few pupils in School III made maximum scores in April. The following grade averages were obtained:

Section 2. Reading Comprehension (Grade equivalent)	February	April	June
	2.2	2.7	3.3

In School III, as in the other three schools, there was greatest opportunity for gains on one test on which perfect scores were less frequent-

ly made in April than on any other test. On this test of "Interpretations," the following grade equivalents were attained:

	February	April	June
Subtest F. Interpretations (Grade equivalent)	*	2.5	3.2
* Score below norms of test			

In School IV, the children did exceptionally well on the tests and some achieved perfect scores on subtests at the beginning of the ex-

periment. The total scores for the 24 pupils yielded the following grade status at the time of the three testings:

	February	April	June
Total Test (Grade equivalent)	3.3	3.8	4.2

Since 21 pupils achieved maximum subtest scores on one or more tests at the time of the April testing, the gain during the experimental period is really remarkable. On the "Interpre-

tations" tests, as in School III, fewer students made perfect scores in April; the scores revealed a marked gain despite the fact that the upper limits of the test norms were achieved in June

	February	April	June
Subtest F. Interpretations (Grade equivalent)	3.2	3.7	4.3

by many pupils. In this school, growth in reading was clearly greater during the experimental period.

The results of the tests for School V are similar to those reported for the two preceding schools. The following results were obtained:

	February	April	June
Total Reading (Grade equivalent)	3.0	3.5	3.8

These attainments should be evaluated in terms of the fact that 21 of the 36 pupils made perfect scores on one or more subtests in April. On the "Interpretations" subtest, in which there

was again the greatest chance for improvement because of the small number of perfect scores, the following norms were attained:

	February	April	June
Subtest F. Interpretations (Grade equivalent)	3.0	3.3	3.7

Again the gains in reading during the experimental period were larger.

was found. The tests yielded the following results:

In School VI, a somewhat similar pattern

	February	April	June
Total Reading (Grade equivalent)	2.9	3.3	3.6

Thus a gain of .4 grade transpired during the control period as compared with a gain of .3 grade during the experimental period. On the April testing, however, 21 of the 41 pupils made maximum scores on one or more subtests.

On the "Interpretations" subtest, there were fewer perfect scores and hence there was the greatest opportunity for gains to be made after the April testing. On this test, the pupils attained the following status:

	February	April	June
Subtest F. Interpretations (Grade equivalent)	3.0	3.2	3.6

Despite the relatively small amount of the difference between the gains made during the experimental and the control periods a pattern became evident on analysis of the results. When allowance was made for pupils making perfect scores in April, it was clear that a somewhat greater gain in reading skill was made during

the experimental period than during the control period. Moreover, on the one test in which the greatest gain was possible, there was the most noticeable improvement during the experimental period. Table II reports these gains for four schools.

TABLE II
Gains on Subtests in Which Greatest
Opportunity for Improvement Appeared in April

School		February	April	June
3	F. Interpretations	3.2	3.7	4.3
4	F. Interpretations	*—	2.5	3.2
5	F. Interpretations	3.0	3.3	3.7
6	F. Interpretations	3.0	3.2	3.6

*Score below norms of test—average score $\frac{1}{2}$ raw score point

Teachers' Reactions

Additional evidence concerning gains in reading was obtained by analysis of teachers' responses to a questionnaire. (See Table III). Following is a brief summary of this analysis:

Appraisal of pupil growth in reading ability. Five of the nine teachers who participated in this experiment indicated that their pupils' rate of learning to read was faster during the experimental period than during the control period. None stated that her pupils gained less during the experimental period; those who expressed some reservation on this question wrote that the greater gain was doubtful or that the rate of learning was "about 50-50". However, most of these teachers stated that greater gains had been made during the experimental period.

The teachers also indicated that their pupils had done more related reading during the experimental period than during the period of regular instruction. The largest number of books were read in schools in which there were rich library resources, and in which the teacher and the librarian worked together to make available books related to the readers. Although most of the teachers stated that the use of the films and readers stimulated wide reading, a few indicated that the motivation was greater

for the bright than for the slow pupil during the experimental period.

The teachers were unanimous in their declaration that there was greatly improved class discussion associated with the films and film readers. Following are some comments: "The film acted as a strong stimulus for class discussions." "All children seemed eager to relate their reading to other experiences."

The teachers also agreed that the improved reading from the film reader experiment transferred to the reading of other materials. They pointed out, in this connection, that the transfer was highest for materials using the same vocabularies. Several teachers reported that more of the children read independently at the library during the experimental period than during the usual program.

Reactions to the films and film-readers. Eight of the nine teachers agreed that pupil enthusiasm was very high and was maintained throughout the experimental period. However, the ninth teacher indicated that the films were more popular than the books. "The children enjoyed the novelty of the films," she said.

The pupils' favorite films, according to their teachers, were *A Day at the Fair* (5 votes), *Sheep the Farm Dog* (3 votes), and *The Food*

Store (1 vote). The children found the subject-matter of these films "familiar, exciting, and enjoyable," the teachers pointed out.

According to the teachers' reports, the pupils' favorite film-readers were *Shep the Farm Dog* (4), *A Day at the Fair*, (3), and *Three Little Kittens* (1). (See Table IV).

The teachers indicated that no film or film-reader was disliked by the pupils.

Six of the teachers stated that the films aided the pupils in recognizing words and in getting their meaning. Some attributed the increased skill of the pupils in word-recognition to the effective use of pictures in the film-readers. Eight teachers stressed the value of the films in providing a common background of experiences, so that the children clearly understood the concepts that were introduced. "The stories in the films seem to define the new words thoroughly, so that very little discussion was needed to obtain a thorough understanding of a new concept." "Films made the reading concrete in the child's mind—an experience shared by all the children." However, there was this reservation of one teacher: "The superior pupils as usual had the better appreciation."

Reactions to the recording-projector. Eight of the teachers stated that the making of a recording for each story and hearing their own words played back not only assured the children's understanding of new words, but aided them in oral expression. "When the narrations were played back the children could hear their mistakes and correct them for the next recording." "The children realized that they had to speak loudly and clearly." "Hearing their own voices induced self-improvement."

These teachers found that there was a great growth in their pupils' oral expression during the experimental period. "The children were more inclined to enjoy and retell the stories—an important gain." "The pupils learned to speak distinctly in good clear sentences because they had good models in the film."

That there was general language growth during the experimental period is shown by the teachers' assertion that their pupils improved not only in oral expression but also in written expression. "I was able to get more compositions written because the children had more concrete experiences to write about."

All the teachers indicated that they had improved in their own voice quality and general speech after using the recording-projector. "It certainly made me conscious of the sound of my voice and eager to improve my tone and enunciation," wrote one teacher. "I was surprised. I *did* think I was more careful in my diction!" stated another.

Teachers' personal reactions. A very important factor in the success of this experiment was the high professional character of the teachers. All stated that they were keenly interested in the outcomes of the experiment throughout its course. "It was as much of a new experience for me, as it was for the children," was the conviction of several teachers.

Most of the teachers felt that they had come to know their pupils better through this approach and had thereby achieved better class rapport. "There was a noticeable lengthening of interest span and better understanding and unity on the part of the pupils," wrote one teacher. Several others were grateful for the development of new techniques for instruction.

The teachers' favorite films were *A Day at the Fair* (6), *Farm Animals* (2), *Three Little Kittens* (1). Their favorite film-readers were *A Day at the Fair* (4), *Three Little Kittens* (2), *Farm Animals* (2), and *Shep the Farm Dog*. (1).

Teachers' general appraisal of the experiment. One very significant value inherent in this approach, many teachers felt, was the amount and quality of group activity engendered—the pupils became better acquainted as a group through this approach. "They worked in small homogeneous groups on all the cor-

related activities." The teachers agreed, too, that class discussions and group work helped to socialize the solitary children. "I was amazed at the recording of a few children who *never* before volunteered to talk."

Most of the teachers found that the film-reader method was an easy and effective way to teach some reading skills. "The films established a background for clarifying many mistaken ideas," wrote one teacher. Others stressed these advantages of this approach: "Through this approach, the children have an opportunity to participate in a medium they approve, to start with." "A vicarious experience is provided where an actual one has been lacking and sometimes can not be supplied." "When knowledge is gained through several senses it is acquired more rapidly and more lastingly; for this reason this approach has an advantage over the usual method of presenting words." "Motivation by the teacher is unnecessary—interest is present and waiting for further development after each film showing." "The slower child has a double exposure to reading—an important ad-

vantage for him." "And the gifted child is challenged, too."

However, these limitations were cited: "For the very slow readers the difficult and new words must still be drilled upon." "The approach might be too costly." One teacher expressed this reservation concerning vocabulary development: "Because they saw 'Curly,' talked 'Curly,' drew 'Curly,' was no guarantee that they knew 'Curly' was the name of the kitten in the film." To teach this fact, "the usual drill was necessary," pointed out this teacher who acknowledged few values in this approach.

Most of the teachers indicated that they would like to have these facilities available for the teaching of reading in the future. Some qualified this response with such statements as: "Only as an additional means of getting interest in reading—perhaps one unit of three stories each semester." "As supplementary material this approach should be articulated closely with a basic reading program." A summary of the teachers' responses is found in Table III.

TABLE III
Some Attitudes of Teachers toward
the Value of the Experiment

	More	Number of teachers		Less
		Equal	Doubtful	
Rate of Learning Greater	5	2	2	0
Amount of Reading Larger	6	2	1	0
Class Discussion Improved	8	0	1	0
Independent Reading Encouraged	7	1	1	0
Transfer to Other Types of Reading Greater	7	1	1	0
Vocabulary Improvement Greater	8	0	1	0
Interest Greater	8	0	1	0
Gains in Speech and Oral Expression Greater	8	0	1	0
Greater Organization of Meanings	8	0	1	0

TABLE IV

Pupils' Favorite Films
(Teacher Report)

1. A Day at the Fair
2. Shep the Farm Dog
3. The Food Store

Pupils' Favorite Film-Readers
(Teacher Report)

1. Shep the Farm Dog
2. A Day at the Fair
3. Three little Kittens

Pupils' Responses to the Questionnaire

This section of the report presents a summary of the responses to a questionnaire which was administered to the pupils. Assistance in giving the questionnaire, and the Interest Inventory too, was given by eighth-grade pupils who recorded the statements of the second-grade pupils. Inquiries were made concerning the attractiveness and value of this approach, film and film-reader preferences, and attitudes toward the recording-projector. Results are presented in Table V.

TABLE V
Children's Attitudes

	Per Cent
Movies Helped Reading	95
Movies Helped Vocabulary	95
Started Hobbies	30
Better Able to work with Others	70
More Work of this Kind Wanted	99

In response to the question *Did seeing the movies help you to read the book which went with them?*, 95 per cent of the pupils indicated that the film helped them in learning to read the books. A few stated that they thought they could have read the books without this help, but they usually added a statement showing that they enjoyed the experience.

In answer to the question *If yes, how were you helped?*, the pupils generally indicated that the film clarified the meaning of unfamiliar words and demonstrated the correct pronunciation of each word. "The books and movies were the same things, so it made it easier for me." "The words which the man said,—a lot of them—were in the books." "The book has the same words, so you know them better." "We could remember how they sounded." "When we heard the words we knew just where they went." Poor readers seemed particularly grateful for the assistance given by this approach. "The film explained the words so I could read." "From seeing the movie I knew the words."

The children were also asked *What things did you see for the first time in these movies?*

Their replies covered a wide range of experiences. Some of them had little previous experience with the subject-matter of these films. They stated that the films and readers gave them an introduction to sheep, woodchucks, ducks, and in a few cases horses and cows. Acquaintance with "a farm, farm tools, a fair, the fairgrounds, a pigpen, a cornfield, and celery in a case," was provided by the films and film-readers for some children. A large number reported that they were introduced to new experiences such as "a man milking cows, a dog heiding cows, the way a cat carries kittens, how a dog works on a farm, and shearing sheep."

Preferred films and film-readers. The children were asked to name the films and film-readers which they had liked best. (See Table VI). The favored movie was *Shep the Farm Dog* (48 votes). Very popular also were *A Day at the Fair* (42 votes), *Three Little Kittens* (24 votes) and *Farm Animals* (10 votes), *The Food Store* received only 9 votes, and *The Mailman*, one. They expressed their pleasure over the introduction of new experiences, and the presentation of interesting animal stories.

TABLE VI

Children's Favorite Films

1. *Shep the Farm Dog*
2. *A Day at the Fair*
3. *Three Little Kittens*
4. *Farm Animals*

Children's Favorite Film Readers

1. *Shep the Farm Dog*
2. *A Day at the Fair*
3. *Three little Kittens*
4. *The Food Store*
6. *Farm Animals*

Their favorite film-reader was *Shep the Farm Dog* (42 votes); the other readers in the order of their popularity were *A Day at the Fair* (35 votes), *Three Little Kittens*, (24 votes), *The Food Store* (18 votes), *Farm Animals* (14 votes), and *The Mailman* (1 vote). Similar reasons were given for these preferences, although some children stressed values associated with learning to read—"I learned

more new words," "Because there were harder words in it," or "Liked the pictures and like to read it," "It was easy to read."

About 70 per cent of the pupils said that they enjoyed all the films. The others qualified their answers. *The Food Store* proved to be the least-liked film. The children cited the presentation of a commonplace, recurring, and generally familiar situation as the reason for their indifference to this film and reader. Although approximately 75 per cent of the pupils indicated that no reader was disliked, some mentioned the relatively unattractive and unappealing quality of *The Food Store*.

Pupil reactions to the recording-projector. For the first presentation of each film to the pupils, the original EBF sound track was played. By use of the Bell and Howell #202 Filmo-Sound Projector, the teacher next recorded an alternate sound track and stressed significant points, re-telling the story in her own words. Finally, the pupils themselves told the story during a showing of the film and recorded their own version of the story in their own language.

To the question *Which voice with the movies did you like better—the man's voice or your teacher's?*, the responses were almost evenly divided—52 per cent of the children favored the man's voice, and 48 per cent favored the teacher's voice. Interestingly, the reasons for choosing either one were the same—because the voice could be heard better, because it was plainer, louder, or clearer.

About 65 per cent of the pupils had the privilege of hearing their own voices on the sound track. More than 80 per cent of this group were enthusiastic about this experience. A few indicated that they were somewhat frightened or embarrassed and hence found little pleasure in this activity. Almost all stated that they enjoyed hearing the voices of their classmates. Many said that the experience helped them to speak more clearly. According

to one child: "I learned I really talk good." Others said: "I learned to talk better." "I learned how to listen to words and people." "Not to make mistakes."

About 30 per cent of the pupils initiated hobbies and collections as a result of this experience. Among the collections, the following were cited: leaves, plants, butterflies, and pictures of animals.

Almost 45 per cent pointed out that they read more often after this experience and that reading became easier and more enjoyable. Despite their greater tendency to read, about 70 per cent stressed the fact that through this activity, particularly the making of the recording, they had learned to work more happily and effectively with their peers.

The children were almost unanimous in their response to the question, *Would you like to see more movies like these, and read more books like the film-readers?* Of the 138 who answered this question, 137 said yes. The sole dissenting voter added "Movies yes; books no." In answer to the question *What other things would you like to see and read about in this way?* the children expressed a desire to have additional film and reader experience on the following topics: animals, cowboys and Indians, science, factories, farm life, zoos, and museums. They desired too, to see some of their favorite stories made into films.

Concluding Statement

This study makes clear the value of incorporating into the basal reading program a series of experiences involving the use of films and film-readers. Although pupil gains were very great during the experimental period, when the films and film-readers were alone used, it must be remembered that these pupils had already participated in one-half of a semester's work with basal readers, as well as the entire first grade program. But the experiment does demonstrate the great value of films and film-readers in motivating and fostering effective

learning and in providing for pupils basic experiences through film presentations. In the sound-film, the pupils heard new words pronounced and they saw pictures of the objects or the situations to which the words referred. In this way they acquired a clear understanding of the concepts involved, and they learned to pronounce the words as they heard them used in a *meaningful setting*. After seeing each film, the children read the story silently in the film reader. The *It's Fun to Find Out* readers are simply written and follow the film narrative closely. Each book is illustrated with photographs taken from the film. Thus the children had an opportunity to read materials which employed a familiar vocabulary related directly to their film experience. Suggestions are given in each reader for further discussion of new expressions and for review of difficult words or phrases. After reading each book, the children composed their own story and recorded it on the magnetic sound track. Then they listened to the story again, this time in their own words as the film was shown. Composing their own

story and recording it on the magnetic sound track heightened the pupils' understanding and appreciation of language and assured the retention and use of their newly acquired vocabulary.

The children recognized these values of the experiment in statements such as "The picture explained the words," "When I talked about it, it sounded like the book was talking itself." Opportunity to demonstrate their abilities was afforded through the use of the sound track on which the pupils recorded their own stories. This provided the final step in the acquisition of a new vocabulary. In the words of the children: "We learned to study what we said," "We could correct our mistakes," and "We learned to say the right thing."

These steps in seeing and hearing and in using language acquisitions seem to be so logical a sequence in efficient teaching and learning that it is probable that the future will see them incorporated in basal reading and language programs throughout our schools.

The Temple University Tenth Annual Reading Institute was held in Philadelphia during the week of February 2 to 6, 1953. The delegates who attended this week's program of meetings for classroom teachers, school administrators, psychologists, and vision and reading specialists represented thirty-five states, Canada, and Norway. This group comprised one of the largest ever to attend these annual conferences.

Throughout this year's sessions, the emphasis was placed upon basic considerations in the organization of effective reading programs for the development of reading skills in all areas of instruction at every school level. The conference was under the direction of Dr. Emmett A. Betts, The Temple University Clinic Staff, and such visiting lecturers as Dr. Israel Dvorine, Baltimore; Dr. Daniel Prescott, University of Maryland; Dr. William Sheldon, Syracuse University; and Dr. Paul Witty, Northwestern University.

The Temple University Reading Clinic has announced that *Differentiated Guidance* will be the theme for the 1954 Institute Program. This session is scheduled for the week of January 25-29, 1954. A copy of the complete program will be available in November of this year. Those interested in securing advance information about the 1954 Program should write to Dr. Emmett A. Betts, The Reading Clinic, Temple University, Philadelphia 22, Pennsylvania.

Current English Forum

Grammar—What and How

E. P. L. asks: "I have heard a good deal about teaching something called 'functional grammar' as opposed to formal grammar. I understand that functional grammar is supposed to be concerned with the actual mistakes students make in their use of English rather than with the full study of syntax and rules associated with conventional grammar. With large masses of students from illiterate and semi-literate backgrounds, however, isn't there need for the drill in formal grammar, which a minority of children from educated homes may not need as much?"

In the twentieth century in the United States we have witnessed a tremendous growth in the enrollments in our elementary and secondary schools. Between 1870 and 1940 the high schools alone had a ninety-fold increase in total enrollment, from about 100,000 to about 7,500,000. In 1870 three-quarters of the high school students went on to college, and they were drawn chiefly from the families of the middle and upper economic groups of that day. In other words, the great majority of these students came from homes where standard English, or a close approximation of it, was spoken. What the past half-century has witnessed has been the entrance into our grade and high schools of literally millions of children from working-class and rural families, whose speech of the home is *the speech of the great majority of the American people*. These are the people—our law-abiding, hard-working, tax-paying fellow-citizens—who produce our manufactured goods and our food. And these are the good people whose English is labelled as "Vulgar" or "Illiterate" in our grammar texts and studies of usage. These are the folks who use "seen" as both a simple past and a "present perfect" ("I seen him last night" and "I seen that often"), who use "here" and "there" as "substantive

modifiers" ("this here car" and "that there place"), who use 'ain't," who use the double negative ("aint got no" and "can't hardly")—who, in short, speak most of their lives in the "grammar" deplored by most of us teachers. By the time their children enter our schools at four, five, or six their language habits are quite thoroughly ingrained. For every thirty hours they are in school, they are at home or in their neighborhood for one hundred and thirty-eight. No definitive figures are currently available for the relative percentages of our population (now estimated at 155,000,000) who speak "Standard English," "Illiterate English," "Homely English," or any other variety. The present writer can only offer a personal estimate: that not more than ten percent of the American people currently speak a brand of English which would conform to even a liberal interpretation of "Standard English."

These being the linguistic facts of life, what are the realities they point to for the teaching of English usage in our vast school system?

First, we must recognize that the kind of English that teachers, particularly English teachers, as a professional class prefer is the social class dialect of about ten per cent of our people.

Second, that for most of the ordinary verbal interchange of daily life, the "Vulgar" or "Illiterate" English sentence patterns and word choices communicate quite clearly and effectively—which is the basic purpose of language. This realization may be a shock to some, but there it is! When the "illiterate" speaker says, "I don't have no change" at the subway change booth, no one is fool enough to wait for a five-dollar bill to be changed. That old textbook rule about two negatives making a positive is linguistic nonsense, just another example of the fact that formal logic and the logic of language are not analogous. And we know what is meant when such a speaker says, "He don't know nothing."

Third, Standard English itself, a minority class dialect in America, has levels within it. Professor Pooley recognizes at least three, with the possibility of a fourth. These are informal Standard, formal Standard, and a possible scientific Standard.¹ The great majority of Standard English speakers operate on the informal level about ninety percent of their verbal lives. Most of their use of language is in familiar, daily speech with family, friends, and working associates. Educated people speak and write formally only for special occasions of speaking and writing. And informal Standard English is characterized by the use of shorter, less involved sentence structures; freer subject-verb agreement and pronoun reference; the use of contracted forms; and the use of shorter, less formal vocabulary, including the use of many neologisms and often current slang. Yet the tendency has been strong in our schools to labor to "bring up" the English of masses of the kind of youngsters we have been talking about to the level of formality of sentence structure and word choice employed only by a small fraction of our people in a small fraction of their own use of English.

Such books as Charles C. Fries's *American English Grammar*, Robert C. Pooley's *Teaching English Usage*, and Albert H. Marckwardt and Fred G. Walcott's *Facts About Current English Usage* have shown clearly the outmoded notions of correctness concerning both formal and informal Standard English, which have bedeviled generations of American school children and teachers. Books such as *The Psychology of English* by Margaret M. Bryant and Janet S. Aiken, *The Use of Language* by Henry F. Pommer and William M. Sale, Jr., and *We Teach English* by Lou LaBrant have shown much that is valuable concerning the interrelatedness of psychological, sociological, and linguistic or grammatical processes.

The only practicable aim of instruction in English usage in our schools is to enable as

¹Robert C. Pooley, *Teaching English Usage*.

many boys and girls from sub-Standard English backgrounds as possible, to use a good, informal level of Standard English *when it will be important in their employment and in their social lives*.

It is to be noted with pleasure that some texts and practice materials based on studies of actual usage and recognizing levels of usage are finding their way into our schools, and that a new generation of English teachers trained in the nature of linguistic history and processes, and in the facts of current English usage, are going forth from our better teacher-training institutions. Also, many older teachers are returning to summer sessions or taking extension work in order to be able to deal more realistically with the problems of teaching English in our time.

The children in the earlier years of elementary school, grades one through six, are in the great majority of cases simply not capable as yet of coping with verbal abstractions about language. They may in many cases be able to memorize short, verbal definitions of "the parts of speech," "the sentence," "a phrase," "a clause," etc. But entirely aside from the fact that the usual definitions of the parts of speech and of the sentence are over-simplifications and ignore the shifting nature of parts of speech and the importance of situation in communication, *there is no evidence to show that knowing such "definitions" ever has any effect on how boys and girls actually speak and write*. It has been the experience of many good teachers on the various levels of elementary and secondary school that children who can learn and recite such definitions of grammatical terms fail to express themselves any more coherently or accurately after this sort of knowledge has been "gained." Countless class hours in many schools are devoted to the diagramming of sentences, not to mention additional hours of homework on such exercises. Bright youngsters often derive a sense of power and enjoyment from dia-

graming. Many more, unable to grasp such relations between meanings, are baffled and frustrated by such assignments. And neither the linguistically inclined nor the non-verbally minded are acquiring any real understanding of how modern English, primarily a non-inflectional and word-order language, is put together or operates in individual or social experience; neither the brighter nor the duller are likely to speak or write any differently for their efforts at diagramming. The pupil who can diagram, "I do not have any time" will continue to say "I don't have no time" in his daily speech, if that is a speech habit of his every day out-of-school environment. And the child who says "I don't have any time" because that is the way his family and social group speaks, has accomplished very little in drawing a picture of this sentence.

Much time is still widely devoted to having students correct errors—real or alleged—in textbook exercise sentences or in workbooks. These exercises are very often constructed to insist that only the forms appropriate to a highly formal or literary level of English are the "right" ones. Students can, and often do, become quite clever at learning the answers which the textbook or the teacher expects. In short, the youngsters learn a language of the classroom. Many a child learns to choose "whom" as the "right answer" to "*who* or *whom* did you expect?" who will never say nothing but "who did you expect" for the good and sufficient reason that *that* is the form used by the great majority of American speakers, uneducated and educated alike. It is *not* "bad English." Other alleged errors ignore the different meanings which may be intended for the "same" assertion in different situations. A good speaker may say, "I object to Mr. Brown's speaking" because he is emphasizing the speaking itself. The speaker may just as well say, however, "I object to Mr. Brown speaking," when what he means is that he objects primarily to Mr. Brown as a person. To insist, as some school exercises do, that it must

be "Mr. Brown's speaking" because (look it up in the proper section of the rules!) a "noun modifying a gerund takes the possessive case" ignores the different meanings that may be intended. It also ignores the fact that a study of actual usage indicates that about fifty per cent of nouns modifying gerunds occur without the "s" in modern English usage! The authors of *The English Language Arts* write: "...the language of today is not to be identified with that found in books but is to be found chiefly upon the lips of people who are currently speaking it."²

Carleton Washburne, formerly Superintendent of Schools in Winnetka, Illinois, once wrote: "The correcting of children's grammar has long been an unrealized aim of schools in connection with oral as well as written English. The aim is unrealized because the school is working against the environment and against the child's nature. A child persists in using so-called ungrammatical English only when it is the vernacular of those with whom he associates on the playground, on the street, and at home... We all want our language to conform to that of our associates—we are uncomfortable and feel alienated if it does not. The child's associates are not pedagogues, nor, in many cases, the bookishly cultivated. Let us, while children are young, accept the language which is the vernacular of their community. We might as well—our gestures against it merely make the child self-conscious and inhibit his freedom of expression; they don't change the pattern.

"As children get older—perhaps in early adolescence—they may reach a point where they see, or can be helped to see, that certain usages, perfectly acceptable in some groups, mark one as limited to those groups, as not knowing one's way around in more sophisticated society, just as would tucking one's napkin into one's neck at a dinner party. When a child has

²*The English Language Arts*, National Council of Teachers of English, p. 276.

reaching
generally
earns
that a
child
ance
and w
in m
chance
to bel
adoles

And
if gett
the la
to spe
lish in
them
ways
The v
of his
questi
article

Let
are na
and th
words,
"sincer
wax,"
who d
cealing
also in
enjoy
groups
down
to the
first, h
turned
of erro
functio
panels,
grams,
kinds
books,

³Carleton Washburne, *Educational*

reached the point of caring about manners and general social acceptability, we can get his earnest co-operation in overcoming any habits that are considered gauche. . . . Only when the child has developed a strong desire for acceptance by a group that uses 'grammatical' English and when he therefore seriously wants our help in modifying his language, do we have any chance of helping him. And this, I am inclined to believe, does not usually occur much before adolescence."³

At this point a reader may well ask: "But, if getting our boys and girls from homes where the language of the people prevails to be able to speak and write an acceptable informal English in those situations which will require it of them is the only reasonable goal, and if the old ways have failed, how can we achieve the goal?" The writer hopes to offer an outline, at least, of his, and some other people's, answer to this question in this concluding section of this article.

Let us begin by noting that boys and girls are naturally interested in language, their own and that of those about them. New and strange words, new phrases, the origins of words like "sincere" (from the Latin "sine cera"; "without wax," a phrase applied to honest pottery makers who did not pass off imperfect pots by concealing breaks with wax). Boys and girls are also interested in acting out adult roles. They enjoy "conducting meetings," panels, discussion groups, quiz programs. They also enjoy putting down their feelings about things of real interest to them on paper—provided they do not, *at first*, have their personal experience themes returned to them loaded with red ink corrections of errors. Youngsters know that adults who function in these real-life situations such as panels, discussion groups, well-known quiz programs, and news reporting do not use certain kinds of double negatives, say "ain't" or "them books," speak in gross violation of concord as

³Carleton Washburne, *A Living Philosophy of Education*, pp. 323-325.

in "they was here," use verb forms like "we seen him play." Boys and girls will want to learn the speech habits of Standard English if they are given opportunities, not just on occasion, but continually, to use this level of language in situations of these sorts as part of the English and general school program. A teacher can, unobtrusively, jot down the gross violations of informal Standard English made by certain students as they put on such activities before others. After the program, the teacher can have a list of such errors. The "bad" sentences can be put on the board, analyzed for all to see, and the corrections made. Emphasis ought never to be placed on calling attention to an error as "your bad error, John," but on all the errors as problems common to the group. "You all need to learn these things. Let's see what mistakes got into our use of English today."

From a set of themes, likewise, the teacher can make a collection of the *real* errors made and, following each writing assignment, make a lesson on sentence structure or word use from the sentences actually written by the students themselves. Normal youngsters, and most of them are, are far more likely to be interested in doing something about *their own* English than they are in correcting a textbook writer's sentences or in filling in blanks with "correct forms" on a workbook page. A student acquires a "feel" for good sentence structure by being encouraged, and allowed, to write freely about his personal problems, his likes and dislikes, his ambitions, places he has seen, or things he has read. If his first efforts are weighted down with errors, let him concentrate on a few of the worst ones. Select a few of the sentences worst in need of repair. Underline only those. Let him re-write, after he understands his errors, just those few very bad sentences. Don't make him rewrite the whole theme. If you do, he will see to it, if he can, that his future themes are very short. He will also see to it that he avoids errors by keeping to short, childish sentences and words he is sure of not misspelling. In

other words, he will refrain from overcoming his errors—and from growing in his ability to use English clearly, effectively, and maturely.

Rome was not built in a day. To eradicate gross errors from the speech and writing of boys and girls requires time, persistence, and patience. It requires the willingness of teachers *to listen* to the English of their students, and *to read* it. One, two, or four themes throughout a term will not do it. Cumulative practice in reproducing in the classroom activities modeled on adult situations demanding good, everyday English and continuous practice in writing short or medium length themes on matters vital to the students, with effort at weeding out a few errors each time, *can* do it. And all of this demands teachers who are sufficiently interested in the language growth of youth to be willing to assign and to read such themes, and to plan with their students the kinds of speech activities which will make them want to speak like educated grown-ups. Yes, the writer knows what some now over-worked teachers and harrassed administrators may be thinking at this point. How can teachers with five classes a day, of thirty to forty, or more, students possibly teach in the

ways suggested? It is true that teachers so overburdened cannot assign or read as many themes as are necessary for the best results. But even the lesser number that they can assign, followed by analysis of the real errors made by the students themselves and practice on correction of these errors, will produce more improvement in the English usage of these students than the methods now still so widely employed. Certainly the teaching of good English through the sorts of speech activities that have been suggested entails no more work on the part of the teachers than do many other kinds of lesson plans now followed. The American people are spending increasing amounts in a high cost era for the education of their children. The goal of teaching good English usage to students who will need a command of it for acceptance and advancement in adult life can be achieved only by having them learn through real, meaningful use of their language under constant supervision of teachers who know what kind of language it is that they are teaching, and who realize that in the long run the forms of the everyday speech of educated people are what constitute good English.

Edward L. Anderson,
Brooklyn College

From *The Uneducated*. By Eli Grinsberg and Douglas W. Bray. Columbia University Press, 1953.

Despite the tremendous advances which have been made in both absolute and in percentage terms to eradicate illiteracy, especially during the past 60 years, the scale of the problem today is still excessively large considering the importance which society attaches to education and considering the economic resources available to us for the support of education.

The South is the region of major difficulty because it has so many children in proportion to total population to educate. A further factor there is that Negro education has been, at least in the past, poorly supported to an extreme, and there are great deficiencies to make up. In 1950, the number of children between the ages of 5 and 17 equalled only 30% of the number of adults in the Northeast, as compared to 44% in the South. Moreover, the South has less income with which to educate these children. Against a national per capita income average of \$1,436 in 1950, Mississippi averaged only \$698 while Arkansas, South Carolina and Alabama averaged around \$830. The average expenditure per pupil for the United States in 1947-48 was \$179 as against \$71 in Mississippi and \$93 in Arkansas. With respect to Negro education, the average value of property, buildings and equipment per pupil in Alabama in 1948 was \$35 as compared to a national average of \$441 for all pupils.

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

Teachers interested in a scholarship, fellowship, or assistantship in the field of hearing and speech will find the article "Opportunities in the Hearing and Speech Field," which appeared in the January issue of *The Volta Review*, very helpful.

Institutions and organizations granting these aids for the academic year 1953-54 are listed alphabetically by states and cities. The list includes 20 states, 36 institutions.



Two new FSA-Office of Education bulletins of interest are *Schools at Work in 48 States* (No. 13, 1952), and *RECORDINGS for teaching literature and language in the high school* (No. 19, 1952).

Schools at Work in 48 States is a study of elementary school practices which gives a brief picture of school activities throughout the country for the purpose, not to develop uniformity, but to stimulate widespread discussion and evaluation. The booklet takes up the work of teachers, pupils, the school program, and the school and community working together. However, methods of teaching the various school subjects are not described. This has been done in *The Place of Subjects Series* published in 1951-52.

Of particular interest to language arts teachers in the booklet are the sections on reading, writing and spelling, social understanding and experience, creative expression, and communicating.

Recordings may be of some use to teachers of the upper elementary grades. The bibliography includes nearly 500 titles, most of which have been produced since the end of World War II. Most of the recordings are

grouped by type of literature: drama, poetry, biography, and others (musical selections which have pertinency to particular literature selections and types, for example). One shortcoming of the bibliography may be that no appraisal of the recordings is offered. However, as the author points out, a valuable learning exercise can be provided by pupils making their own selections with the help of the teacher. Annotations do include titles of the records, catalog numbers, R. P. M., and distributors.

Of interest to teachers at all levels is the introductory material. We found the discussion of the use of recordings, usefulness of records today, selection and methods of using records, storing records, and activities to improve listening abilities of noteworthy merit.

Schools at Work in 48 States costs 35 cents, *Recordings* 25 cents per copy. Both may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.



A Workshop in Corrective Reading has been announced by the Department of Education, University of Chicago, for the dates June 29-July 24. The Workshop is being sponsored in affiliation with the Sixteenth Annual Conference in Reading, which will form the first four days of the workshop. Following the Conference, teachers, supervisors, administrators, and reading clinicians can intensively study in the phase of corrective reading of their choice.

We suggest that interested teachers write for a brochure which describes the program, workshop staff, credit and tuition, and courses offered. Address correspondence to Mrs. Helen

¹John Deere Junior High School, Moline, Ill.

M. Robinson, Department of Education, 5835 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 37.



The United Nations, UNESCO, and American Schools, the official Educational Policies Commission statement, is available free from the EPC at NEA headquarters. It makes interesting reading whether a teacher, or a layman, views the contemporary educational climates as one of inquisitions or one of necessary reassessments.

At the same time, Dean Hollis L. Caswell's lecture condensed as "The Great Reappraisal of Public Education" and printed in the February *NEA Journal* sheds further light on the forces which have converged to invoke fateful decisions concerning education.

Both of these forthright positions might well be emasculated by an attempt at condensation here. We recommend them heartily.



Oral and Written Expression, a teacher's guide to the development of skills, in two volumes, has been released by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools of San Diego County, California. Volume I includes grades 4-8. Each volume, which is actually two books in one, includes these two distinct parts: (1) Scope and sequence through the grades, and (2) Language experiences.

The guide is outstanding as an example of what teachers can do in the way of defining their working philosophy, describing its implementation, and listing all types of materials instrumental to their work and that of their pupils in the school language arts program.

Information regarding price and availability of *Oral and Written Expression* may be obtained from the Superintendent of Schools, San Diego County, 209 Civic Center, San Diego 1.



Dr. Paul Farmer, coordinator of English in the Atlanta, Georgia high schools, and past president of the NCTE, has developed an "Exam for Teachers of English" which we feel is worth quoting here, and one which all English teachers should "pass" to consider their work adequate. With Dr. Farmer's permission, and that of the *Georgia Education Journal*, publisher of the "Exam," we quote it here:

[1] What did I do this semester to help pupils find satisfaction in using their strong points and in improving their weak points in reading, writing, speaking, and listening?

[2] What did I do to show pupils that English is more than academic, bookish subject—that it is a vital part of their personalities, daily living, and social and vocational well-being?

[3] What satisfactions and conscious growth in appreciation of literature were my pupils able to point to specifically?

[4] What did I read to my pupils in the hope of increasing their enjoyment of literature and of convincing them that satisfactions from reading can be felt more deeply and will last longer than those from radio and television?

[5] What books did I read for own satisfaction as a person who believes that literature is a living, vital force in one's life?

[7] What creative work of my own, factual or imaginative, caught the interest of my pupils and helped to build mutual confidence and respect?

[8] What fresh ideas did I use for class activities and find worth using again?

[9] What did I learn from my pupils that helps me to understand people and to work with greater satisfaction than I felt before?

[10] What specific and reliable evidence have I for the growth of my pupils in English?



New materials which may fill a particular language arts need:

Bibliography of Books for Children. A biennial, annotated, classified list of good books for children, published by the Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 15th Street N. W., Washington 5, D. C. 120 p. Price one dollar.

Publick Occurrences both Forreign and Domestick. A facsimile reprint of what is believed to be America's first newspaper, published on September 25, 1690. Order from International Newspaper Collector's Club, Box 7271, Phoenix, Arizona. Single copy costs ten cents.

Aids in Selection of Materials for Children and Young People. A bibliography of aids for choosing printed materials, recordings, and non-theatrical films for children and adolescents, compiled by the Joint Committee of the NEA and the ALA. Single copies are free from the NEA. 8p.

Fare for the Reluctant Reader, by J. Roy Newton, Anita E. Dunn, Mabel E. Jackman, and Bernice C. Bush. An annotated bibliography of books chosen especially for adolescents who are reluctant to read. Order from New York State College for Teachers, Albany. 167 p. Price one dollar.



Science Research Associates, Inc., have released seven new booklets of interest to all teachers. Included in the releases are two new Junior Life Adjustment Booklets: *Getting Along with Parents*, and *Politics for Boys and Girls*; three Better Living Booklets (for parents and teachers): *Helping Brothers and Sisters Get Along*, *Helping the Gifted Child*, and *Your Children's Health*; two Life Adjustment Booklets (for older adolescents): *Making and Keeping Friends*, and *Understanding Politics*.

All of these booklets cost forty cents each, with special quantity discounts, from Science Research Associates, 57 West Grand Avenue, Chicago 10.



Teachers with the time and inclination to do some extra reading may find the October issues of *Educational Leadership* and *Education* (first three articles), and the October and December issues of *Childhood Education* very rewarding.

The *Educational Leadership* number is concerned with the educator as a teacher and citizen, and how the two roles influence each other. The first three articles in *Education* discuss reading topics: reading current events, literature in an unsettled world, and skills that are developed from reading literary types. The issue is probably not of great importance to elementary teachers, however.

The two *Childhood Education* issues look into what we know about children in the home, in the classroom, and from research (*This We Know About Children*), and the question of whether we recognize the differences in children by making differences in the school program (*Children Differ—So Should Programs*).



Here are the Junior Literary Guild selections for the month of April, 1953:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years of age: *Biquette, The White Goat*, by Francoise. Scribner's Sons, \$2.00.

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years of age: *The Terrible Mr. Twitmeyer*, by Lilian Moore and Leone Adelson. Random House, Inc., \$2.00.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age: *Basketball Comes To Lonesome Point*, by James Sterling Ayars. The Viking Press, Inc., \$2.50.

For older girls, 12 to 16 years of age: *Scarlet Royal*, by Anne Emery. Macrae Smith Company, \$2.50.

For older boys, 12 to 16 years of age: *Cinder Cyclone*, by Howard M. Brier. Random House, Inc., \$2.50.



BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

EDITED BY MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT
[May Hill Arbuthnot is well-known as teacher,
writer, and lecturer in the field of children's
books. She is author of the volume, *CHIL-
DREN AND BOOKS* (Scott, Foresman, 1947)
and Associate Professor Emeritus of Western
Reserve University.]

In March, a special committee of the American Library Association announced its decisions for the children's book awards of 1953.

The Newbery Medal for the most distinguished literature for children written in 1952 was awarded to Ann Nolan Clark for her book, SECRET OF THE ANDES.

The Caldecott Medal for the most outstanding picture book of the year went to Lynd Ward for THE BIGGEST BEAR.

The present editor of this review section came suddenly into the work without knowing what books were out for review and due to appear. As a result, some of the books published early in 1952 were omitted. One of these is the winner of the Newbery Medal.

Secret of the Andes. By Ann Nolan Clark. Illustrated by Jean Charlot. Viking, 1952. \$2.50. (8-12)

This is a strange, mystical story, full of the beauty of wild mountain country, of noble animals and of dedicated human beings. Children may not understand the significance of a dedicated life in the abstract but they can understand it objectively in terms of Cusi's decision.

In the beginning Cusi did not know there was anything unusual about his life, high up in a hidden valley of the Andes, where he and old Chuto guarded a herd of precious llamas. But after Cusi caught a glimpse of a family, far down the mountains, he was troubled and even

this beloved llama Misti could not comfort him. So Chuto sent the boy down the mountains to a great city. Cusi's golden ear plugs marked him as one of royal Incan blood and on all sides his people quietly helped him. Dazzling as the Spanish city seemed to Cusi, he knew at last, that he must go back to old Chuto on the mountain tops and to his work, the preservation and breeding of the royal llama herd.

Children may not choose this book voluntarily. It must be introduced to them and read aloud perhaps, but it is worth while. Miss Clark has written a distinguished book. (It suggests the influence of another mystic, Mary Austin). But above all, Miss Clark has given children a sense of the dignity of an ancient people and the other-worldliness of some lives. Children need to live with beauty now and then and this book has beauty.

Halfway to Heaven. By Ruth Adams Knight. Illustrated by Wesley Dennis. Whittlesey House (McGraw-Hill), 1952. \$2.75 (12-)

The theme of a dedicated life dominates this book also, but at a more mature level. It is the story of the monks of St. Bernard, the dogs and the life-saving service which they used to carry on, high up in the Alps in the Jovis Pass between Italy and Switzerland. In particular it is the story of Joseph, an Italian who began even in boyhood to train himself for this difficult service. The hardships of his novitiate are

almost unendurable, and so terrible are the storms, the mountain cold, and the blinding snows and ice of winter, that after seven or eight years the brothers have to leave the Hospice for service in the valley. But Joseph endures every hardship for love of God, service to men and his one earthly love—the magnificent dogs with which he works, especially Barry the dog he trained. This is the dog whose record of forty lives saved made history and after his tragic death, the best dog was always named Barry. The training of the dogs and their skill, the hard life of the monks and their heroism are beautifully told. It is a good story for the whole family to read.

Ladycake Farm. By Mabel Leigh Hunt. Drawings by Clotilee Embree Funk. Lippincott, 1952. \$2.25. (9-12)

Grownups will probably classify this book as controversial since it faces the problem of racial prejudice frankly. Children could take it in their stride because it is a gay story, one of the best Miss Hunt has ever written, and that is high praise. What child would not enjoy moving to the country inside your own house which is crawling along on rollers? That is what happened to the Negro family of Little Joe, India Rose and Pearly May. Their wonderful father, Big Joe, had bought a farm and the children knew that all the white farmers had agreed to their coming except one. It was certainly bad luck that the farm of that one hostile man should be next to theirs. His ugly sign of warning took the joy out of their first day on their own property and they never played by their brook again. Otherwise the farm brought nothing but joy. The great maple tree in their yard, the farm animals, their new school, the succession of the seasons, friendly neighbors and Big Joe's success as a farmer, all spelled happiness. But it was "Mommy" with her sweetness and her daily readings from their dictionary, who took the bitter out of "bittersweet." This story, despite the problem, remains a warm and joyous account of children whose family happi-

ness made it possible for them to meet difficulties with courage and goodness.

Amahl and the Night Visitors. By Gian-Carlo Menotti. Narrative adaption by Frances Frost. Illustrations by Roger Duvoisin. Whittlesy House (McGraw-Hill), 1952. \$2.75 (8 up)

Frances Frost, author of stories and poetry, and Roger Duvoisin, artist and Caldecott winner, have given this Christmas opera beauty and distinction as a book, apart from the music. The pictures are deep and rich in color and the text has a cadenced flow that reads aloud beautifully. It is a book for the whole family to enjoy with or without the television Christmas production.

The story is a strange admixture of earthy humor and the supernatural, Amahl, a crippled shepherd boy, scandalizes his mother with his tall tales, "lies" she calls them. So when he tells her about a new star and the approach of three Kings she is outraged. But there they are! And when they come into her poor house stranger things happen than Amahl ever dreamed. The gentle King, the dark King and the comic King, with his crown askew, bring warmth, gaiety and news of a newborn Child. This Child, they say, will build His kingdom on love and the keys of his city will belong to the poor. When Amahl decides to give his crutch to the Child, he is healed of his lameness and when he decides to find the Child himself, his mother agrees and watches her son set off on his pilgrimage with the three kings.

With or without the music, this Christmas story is strangely moving. Like Dickens' *Christmas Carol* it should be revived each year and enjoyed again.

In the last decade, there has been such a remarkable revival of interest in and use of poetry in the schools that it seems desirable to bow the 1952 books out and the 1953 books in with reviews of a number of poetry books for children.

All Together. A Child's Treasury of Verse. By Dorothy Aldis. Illustrated by Marjorie Flack, Helen D. Jameson and Margaret Freeman. Putnam's, 1952. \$3.00 (4-10)

It is delightful to have 144 of Mrs. Aldis' most popular verses brought together between the covers of this one attractive volume. All the old favorites which have pleased a generation of children, are here together with ten new ones. Many a young mother or teacher is going to look for "Hiding," "The Goldfish," "Blum," "Hot Weather," "Feet," and a dozen other favorites which she enjoyed as a child and wishes to share with children today. Mrs. Aldis speaks happily and wittily of the child's everyday thoughts and experiences and children respond with chuckles to words which might almost be their own. The gay illustrations, sometimes in black and white, sometimes red and white are humorous commentaries on the verses and add to the charm of the book.

Time For Poetry. General Edition. Compiled by May Hill Arbuthnot. Illustrated by Arthur Paul. Scott, Foresman, 1952. \$3.00 (4-14)

This expanded edition of the classroom anthology contains nearly 700 poems. They are grouped around people, animals, travel, weather, seasons, festivals, religious poems, nonsense and wisdom. The poets range from Mother Goose to T. S. Eliot with a preponderance of such moderns as Milne, Fyleman, Farjeon, Sandburg, Robert Frost, Frances Frost, and Walter de la Mare. Numerous pen and ink sketches reflect the mood of the poem and footnotes aid interpretation and give suggestions for choral speaking.

Windy Morning. Written and illustrated by Harry Behn. Harcourt, 1953. \$2.00 (6 up)

The Little Hill by Harry Behn made 1949 a memorable year. His was a new voice and there was authentic poetry for children and young people in that small volume. The thirty-five poems in *Windy Morning* are closer to the young child and farther from the lyricism of the

first volume. Even so, there is not a commonplace verse in the book. The lightest of the light verse is deftly done with a fine sensitivity to melody and movement and with fresh ideas amusingly expressed. "The Gnome" that looked like a crow and spoke like a crow but wasn't, the beedle baddlebug's "Tea Party," "The New Little Boy" who is so refreshingly anti-social and the ear-catching music of "Grasshopper Song" are going to be immediate favorites. "Christmas Morning" has an unhackneyed beauty that is haunting and children will grow up to "Enchanted Summer," and "The Sea Shore." The book itself is beautiful in format, stylized illustrations and fresh color.

Sky Bears. Verse For Children. By Elizabeth Pilant. Exposition Press, 1952. \$2.00. (5-8)

Dr. Pilant writes about many things which interest children. Such titles as "Armadillo," "Brave Buckaroo," "Palomino," "Don Coyote" reflect the West and Southwest about which too little poetry has been written since Mary Austin's memorable book, *Children Sing In the Far West*. Dr. Pilant writes with humor and shows considerable inventiveness in her choice of subjects. Unfortunately, the language is commonplace and frequently slangy. "Tickled Pink," "Peppy Mister Wood Pecker," "My Feet hunt dust for a dunk," are examples. With her background of American folklore more might have been expected in that field. "Making Tracks," for instance, is a genuinely clever bit of Americana, a dialogue between a fleeing rabbit and a pursuing coyote that is thoroughly entertaining. Such little rhymed sayings as "Tails Tell" and "Handy Etiquette" are amusing.

To these new publications in the field of verse for children don't forget to add David McCord's delightful *Far and Few*, reviewed earlier.

Tales of Faraway Folk. By Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Illustrated by Irena Lorentowicz. Harper, 1952. (7-10)

TH
welco
storyt
author
guishe
in ora
The d
stem f
casus.
that d
stories
mentar
with p
young
"The C
Judge'
from t
childre
saying
being
storyte
Song o
by
\$2.
Th
Matthe
and ad
boy, ac
dog or
with it
speak
those w
for all
Jones'
faces p
flowers
merely
juncos,
recogni
Canticl
with "o
promise
This is

These ten unfamiliar folktales are not only welcome additions to folklore but a boon to storytellers looking for fresh materials. The authors, husband and wife, are both distinguished writers and they have told these stories in oral style with a contagious swing and verve. The dialogue is notable. The stories themselves stem from Central Asia, Karelia and the Caucasus. They have a marked economy of incident that drives home the point of these wisdom stories with swift strokes. The spirited commentaries on behavior and the surprise endings with please a twelve year old as well as a younger child. "The One Who Wasn't Afraid," "The Gull" (a Kalevala tale), and "The Clever Judge" are especially striking. This quotation from the book should encourage storytelling for children of all ages. "One Northern tribe has a saying that in ancient times, to keep men from being weary-hearted, a kind god created the storyteller."

Song of the Sun. From the Canticle of the Sun by St. Francis of Assisi. Macmillan, 1952. \$2.25. (4-)

This ageless song of praise, translated by Matthew Arnold, has been exquisitely illustrated and adorned by Elizabeth Orton Jones. A small boy, accompanied throughout the pictures by his dog or cat or toys, views with wonder the world with its myriad of living creatures. He seems to speak the words of St. Francis' Canticle, but those words, humble and adoring, are, of course, for all ages. So are the beautiful details of Miss Jones' pictures. Multitudes of feathered or furry faces peer out of the borders with fish, fruits, flowers and small snails, as well. Nor are these merely decorative creatures but chickadees, juncos, foxes, porcupines, and dozens of other recognizable denizens of field and forest. The Canticle is not used in its entirety but concludes with "our mother and earth" and the final promise to "serve Him with great humility." This is a book for children to own.

Red Sails For Capri. By Ann Weil. Illustrated by C. B. Falls. Viking, 1952. \$2.50. (9-12)

The unusual characteristic of this story, a blend of fact and fiction, is that it is told almost entirely in dialogue. Because of the long conversations and the introduction of many characters, the story gets underway slowly but moves more briskly as the mystery grows. It has to do with the discovery of what is now known as the Blue Grotto on the Island of Capri, and the latter part of the book is full of suspense and excitement. The characters are all rugged individualists and thoroughly amusing—Papa Pagano of the inn, the three unique tourists, Michele the boy and best of all that masterly chef, mamma Pagano, who talks or sings her kettles and foods into such harmony that only the most delectable and perfect dishes are produced. The funniest part of the story is when mamma, who does not approve of what the men are up to, goes on a strike. The pampered tourists are in immediate despair and so are poor Michele and his papa who try to do the cooking. However, even this drop from the dietary sublime to the abysmal cannot stop the adventure and the actual discovery of the Grotto is thrilling.

Buffalo Bill. By Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Lithographed on stone by the authors. Doubleday, 1952. \$2.75 (4-9)

The d'Aulaires' *Benjamin Franklin* was so good it seemed to mark a high spot in their vigorous picture-biographies. But now, children are clamoring for their *Buffalo Bill* just as eagerly. Of course, he is a lustrous hero after a boy's own heart. The story covers his life from birth to the glory of his Wild West Show and his peaceful old age and death. His friendship with the Kickapoo Indians, his Pony Express days, his feats as a buffalo hunter and Indian scout, learning from Kit Carson, are all related in the narrative and embellished further in the lively pictures. These are unusually humorous. Somehow the d'Aulaires have captured to per-

fection that strange mixture of genuine heroism and flamboyant showmanship which was Buffalo Bill.

Wu the Gatekeeper's Son. By Eleanor Lattimore. Illustrated by the author. Morrow, 1952. \$2.00 (5-8)

Mrs. Lattimore's *Wu* is written in much the same pattern as the ever-popular *Little Pear* but with less humor and freshness. Wu, like most five-year-olds, is full of curiosities and action. Each chapter relates one complete episode in his mild adventures. His dog Ding and a little girl share his activities which reflect the customs, occasional festivals and everyday life of the Chinese. There is a sameness about the author's Chinese stories, but they are easy pleasant reading and introduce children to children of other lands who seem much like themselves.

Elle Kari. Text by Elly Jannes. Photographs by Anna Riwkin-Brick Macmillan, 1952. \$2.00 (5-10)

Photographs are usually the least appealing of any type of illustrations for a child's book but these photographs are exceptional. It would take a stony heart indeed to resist the charm of this wistful little Lapp girl as the pictures show her. Whether she is wrestling with her big reindeer, or squatting on the floor washing dishes or trying to comb her long blond hair or playing with her friends, serious young Elle Kari is irresistible. The simple narrative tells how the Lapps live the year round and the pictures show them to be a vigorous, handsome people. There is no story but children who pore over these pictures will have respect and a real liking for these people of the reindeer.

The Crow Indians, Hunters of the Northern Plains. By Sonia Bleeker. Illustrated by Althea Karr. Morrow, 1953. \$2.00. (8-12)

The author-anthropologist who is producing this series of books about different Indian tribes—Apaches, Iroquois, Cherokees, Crows and others, is doing a remarkably fine piece of work. Not only does she give children authentic in-

formation about the family life, work, play, dress, customs, and history of each tribe but her factual narratives are exceedingly good reading. There is enough of a story to hold the facts together and to engage the interest of the reader. This book, for instance, begins with a raid on another tribe that not only fails but in which the most promising of the Crow boys is killed. Instantly the Crows go into action and are on the move, not for immediate revenge but to elude the enemy and plan a delayed strategy that will not fail. The superb horsemanship of this tribe, their hunting prowess, their dependence on the buffalo which kept them moving with the herds, these are vividly related and make Indian lore a fascinating field of reading. This would be a good book to use with *Moccasin Trail*, which was reviewed earlier.

Daddy Fell Into the Pond. And Other Poems for Children. By Alfred Moyes. Illustrated by Fritz Kredel. Sheed and Ward, 1952. (6-)

The humor of the title poem is so contagious that to hear it is to join daddy's audience and chuckle too. Moreover, the ebullient Mr. Noyes assures us, it is all too true, daddy *did* fall into the pond! Here are nearly thirty gay and unusual poems for children and grown-ups to enjoy together. There are some delicious nonsense jingles such as "The Dressy Doctor Dabbs," "The Cam-u-al," "The Skunk," "St. George and the Dragon," and others. There are charming observations of the child's world, as "Bright Mountains," "A Surprise For Susan" and the beautiful—"A Child's Vision." And finally, there are some lyrics so lovely in melody and content that they must be heard again and again—"The Unchanging Song," "Good-Night," and "A Slumber Song." Let's not complain if a few of these poems have a British turn of thought or phrase that may be a bit baffling to the American Child. These can be explained. Let's instead, be thankful for these fresh and witty contributions to the child's fund of authentic poetry.

LONGMANS

JUNIOR BOOKS FOR SPRING 1953

The Flicker's Feather

By **MERRITT PARMELEE ALLEN**, author of *Johnny Reb*. The daring adventures of a young scout for Rogers' Rangers, during the guerrilla fighting of the pre-Revolutionary French and Indian Wars. *Decorations by Tom O'Sullivan*.
Ages 12-16. \$2.75

Messenger By Night

By **MARY EVANS ANDREWS**. Two boys aid the Commandos in this thrilling story of the 1943 resistance movement on the island of Rhodes — then occupied by both Italians and Germans. *Illustrated by Avery Johnson*.
Ages 10-14. \$2.75

Program For Christine

By **PEARL BUCKLEN BENTEL**. A radio career book, about a girl whose success in writing scripts and running a radio station almost shattered her romance. *Jacket by Orel Z. Tucker*.
Ages 12-16. \$2.75

Sierra Quest

By **EARL S. COLEMAN**. Danger and high adventure in a present-day western horse story as two boys search through forest fires for a wrecked plane. *Decorations by L. D. Cram*.
Ages 10-14. \$2.75

Little Rhody

By **NETA LOHNES FRAZIER**, author of *My Love Is a Gypsy*. A wonderfully warm, funny, family tale about five children growing up together and moving from New York to Michigan. *Illustrated by Henrietta J. Moon*.
Ages 8-12. \$2.75



The World Turned Upside Down

By **EMMA L. PATTERSON**, author of *Midnight Patriot*. A young farm hand finds himself in the center of the plots, intrigues, and battles of the Revolution as it raged in the Hudson River Valley. *Decorations by Millard McGee*.
Ages 14 up. \$3.00

**LONGMANS, GREEN
& COMPANY**

55 Fifth Avenue • New York 3

Publications of the National Conference on Research in English:

Readiness for Reading and Related Language Arts

Edited by Nila B. Smith

A digest of current research in "readiness" for work at various elementary school levels in reading, speaking, writing, spelling, handwriting, and readiness in vocabulary. 60 pp. \$.65

Readability

Edited by Edgar Dale

Conclusions from research about the influence of typography, content, style, and vocabulary upon readability. How to select or write readable materials. 55 pp. \$.60

Education and The Mass Media of Communication

Edited by John J. DeBoer

Surveys of research, with bibliographies, and original material on magazines, newspapers, radio, and television. Of interest to both elementary and high school teachers. 72 pp. \$.75

Interpreting Language: An Essential of Understanding

Edited by J. Conrad Seegers

Studies of the role of language in the development of understanding. Points out difficulties in concept development and suggests some ways of overcoming the difficulties. 47 pp. \$.65 each. Ten or more \$.50 each

(Enclose remittance with orders of \$5.00 or less)

Order from

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

211 W. 68th Street

Chicago 21, Illinois

The NATION'S LEADING ENGLISH SERIES

... with a personalized approach to language study

THE GOOD ENGLISH SERIES

Harold G. Shane • Florence K. Ferris • Edward E. Keener

A NEW series of English texts for Grades 2-8

- Develops power in language usage.
- A flexible program which can be adapted to children's interests and needs.
- A pupil's handbook for ready reference is included in each book.
- Organized around short self-contained learning situations.
- Exercises and activities are based on children's experiences and interests.

LAIDLAW BROTHERS

328 South Jefferson Street
Chicago 6, Ill.

2121 Staunton Court
Palo Alto, Calif.

221 Fourth Avenue
New York 3, N. Y.

707 Browder Street
Dallas 1, Texas

441 W. Peachtree Street, N. E.
Atlanta 3, Ga.

Announcing

The
*Time
To
Read*

Series by

Bernice E. Leary
E. C. Reichert
Mary K. Reely

Book 1—MAKING FRIENDS

Book 2—SKIPPING ALONG

Book 3—FINDING FAVORITES

This all-new series has been designed as perfect "companion reading" to any basic reading series. Each of the selections in these books, taken from many sources of good children's literature, will enrich the core material, give added practice on basic skills, and provide the primary child with new ideas to talk over and think about. Each book is ideally suited for correlation with other subject areas.

Send for examination copies

J. B. Lippincott Company

333 West Lake Street, Chicago 6, Illinois
East Washington Square, Philadelphia 5, Pennsylvania

good
companions
for
your
literature
program

By

May Hill Arbuthnot

teacher,
storyteller,
author,
lecturer

Time For Poetry

An anthology for teachers of Grades 1-6, designed to bring quantities of the best poems—about things children know and understand—off the library shelf and into the classroom. Mrs. Arbuthnot's introduction offers helpful suggestions for presenting poetry effectively. Available in two editions—the School Edition, 1951, and the expanded and illustrated General Edition, 1952.

Time For Fairy Tales, Old and New

A collection of folk tales, myths, fables, and modern fanciful tales for children, with charming versions of old favorites and much new material. The introduction discusses reading and telling stories to children, and the place of fairy tales in the lives of today's boys and girls.

SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY

CHICAGO 11

ATLANTA 3

DALLAS 2

SAN FRANCISCO 5

NEW YORK 10

*For adding reality to
literature dealing with
the American scene—*

THEN AND NOW in the UNITED STATES

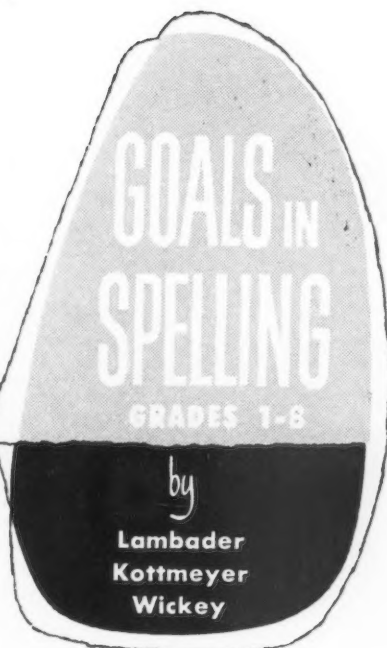
by Clarence W. Sorensen

Eighteen filmstrips, all in color, that portray the changing ways of living in different sections of our country. The story of how man has used the natural resources of each region, both in the days of early settlement and at present, is made dramatically clear.

Silver Burdett

New York, Chicago, Dallas, San Francisco

to build
effective
Spelling Skills



- A functional phonics program.
- The dictionary program builds confident command over words—their meaning, pronunciation, spelling and use.
- Day by day teaching of word construction skills equips for future spelling needs, adds strength to your reading program.

Remember...

GOALS IN SPELLING strengthens reading skills while it builds spelling power!

WEBSTER



PUBLISHING COMPANY

St. Louis 3 Dallas 1 Pasadena 2

WHAT IS MISSING?

Everyone agrees on the important role that reading plays in the school curriculum, yet with all the claims that have been made for better reading—there still exist large numbers of children who have never learned to read as well as they can and should!

Something *is* missing. Ask yourself these questions. How well does your series of basal readers help *you* really teach children to *learn to read*? How well does it help provide the instruction which will insure each child a reading achievement in keeping with his ability?

We believe that the answer to insuring success in this most important study in the school curriculum is found in a series of readers which includes all the excellent features of a sound instructional program. Such a program is given you by the series which puts the teaching of *reading for meaning* FIRST.

THE McKEE READING SERIES

Houghton Mifflin Company

BOSTON 7 NEW YORK 16 CHICAGO 16 DALLAS 1 ATLANTA 3 SAN FRANCISCO 5

*A series as TEACHABLE as it is
inviting to the eyes
of every child*



STERLING, STRICKLAND, LINDAHL, KOCH, RICE, LEAFGREEN, BISHOP

English IS OUR LANGUAGE

Written in vigorous, interesting style by authors of wide teaching experience, this unique basal series helps each child to reach his own highest level of achievement in language skills. It provides sound, integrated training in observing, listening, reading, speaking, and writing . . . bases its simple, direct organization and method on original studies of child growth . . . offers complete maintenance and self-evaluation programs. These are strikingly beautiful books, each with its own illustrator and its own individuality.

GUIDE FOR TEACHING Grades 1 and 2

**TEXTBOOKS, STUDYBOOKS, and GUIDES FOR
TEACHING**

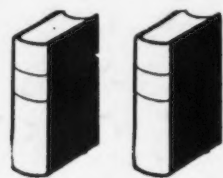
Grades 3 through 8

D. C. Heath and Company

Sales Offices: NEW YORK CHICAGO SAN FRANCISCO ATLANTA DALLAS

Home Office: BOSTON

Absorbing Reading for 7th and 8th Grade Pupils



DOORWAYS TO DISCOVERY

The seventh-grade reader in the Ginn Basic Reader program provides a varied, interesting collection. Here are ghost stories; selections that tell the story behind a story; tales of drama, adventure, and the sea; of boys and girls who show courage and character; stories and real-life accounts from sports and science; biography; with a program of distinguished poetry in each unit. By David H. Russell, Mabel Snedaker, and Doris Gates.

WINDOWS ON THE WORLD

The new Ginn Basic Reader for the eighth grade includes 58 selections—prose and poetry—of high literary quality. Most of them are by modern authors. Here are stories of sports and adventure, stories about the beauty in everyday things; excerpts from biography, significant documents; humorous tales, poems, radio scripts, and a scene from a modern play. By David H. Russell and Mary Agnella Gunn.

For the Teacher - RUSSELL: CHILDREN LEARN TO READ

An unusually thorough examination of research and good practice in elementary reading programs by the senior author of the Ginn Basic Readers. "A most outstanding contribution . . . original in its scope and practical detail."

Ginn and Company

Home Office: Boston

Sales Offices:	Dallas 1
New York 11	Columbus 16
Chicago 16	San Francisco 3
Atlanta 3	Toronto 5

MAY,
1953

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

LOIS LENSKI

GUIDING CREATIVE EXPRESSION

INDIVIDUALIZED READING

THE PLACE OF PHONICS



MAY,
1953

Elementary ENGLISH

An official organ of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

8110 South Halsted Street, Chicago, Illinois

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

JOHN J. DEBOER, *Editor*

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL

President
Harlen Adams

First Vice President
Lou La Brant

Second Vice President
Blanche Trezevant

Secretary-Treasurer
W. Wilbur Hatfield

College Section

High School Section
Leon C. Hood

Elementary Section
Mildred A. Dawson

Past Presidents
Paul Farmer
Lennox Grey

ELEMENTARY SECTION COMMITTEE

Mildred A. Dawson
Chairman

Muriel Crosby
Agnes Gunderson
Leland Jacobs
Grace Rawlings
Ruth E. Swanbeck
Edna L. Sterling

Published
October through May
\$3.50 per year

MAY, 1953

- 261 Lois Lenski's Regional Literature
LELAND B. JACOBS
- 266 Approach to the Writing Period
M. EMILY GREENAWAY
- 273 Spelling Is What You Make It
ROSANNA D. WITHEROW
- 275 An Individualized Reading Program
N. DEAN EVANS
- 281 High Interest Level Reading Materials
WALTER B. BARBE
- 284 A "Fact Festival"
LOUISE E. SHEPPARD
- 286 Modern Biographies for Children
GAITHER MCCONNELL
- 289 Just Try to Beat the Dutch!
RALPH H. LANE
- 293 What Is Teaching?
NATHAN A. MILLER
- 294 First Grade Phonics in Texas
THELMA SHAW AKINS
- 296 Phonics Study and Word Analysis
PAUL WITTY
- 305 Current English Forum
- 308 Look and Listen
- 311 Educational Scene
- 314 Professional Publications
- 316 Books for Children

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH is published monthly from October to May by the National Council of Teachers of English at 8110 S. Halsted St., Chicago 20, Illinois. Subscription price \$3.50 per year; single copies 45 cents. Orders for less than a year's subscription will be charged at the single copy rate. ¶Postage is prepaid on all orders from the United States, Mexico, Cuba, Porto Rica, Panama Canal Zone, Republic of Panama, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands, Guam, Samoan Islands, Virgin Islands and Spain. ¶Postage is charged extra for Canada and for all other countries in the Postal Union as follows: 24 cents on annual subscription (total \$3.74), on single copies 3 cents (total 48 cents). ¶Patrons are requested to make all remittances payable to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH in checks, money orders, or bank drafts. ¶Claims for missing numbers should be made within the month following the regular month of publication. The publishers expect to supply missing numbers free only when losses have been sustained in transit and when the reserve stock will permit. ¶All communications should be addressed to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois. ¶Entered as second class matter December 30, 1942, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois under the Act of March 3, 1879. ¶Additional entry at Seymour, Indiana.

Copyright, 1953 by THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH.

Printed in the U. S. A.